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Islamic Affairs

ICO Issues Statement on Soviet Jewish Emigration

LD1903235390 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 2104 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Jeddah, 19 Mar (SPA)—The Islamic Conference Organization (ICO) has expressed its deep concern over the developments resulting from the displacement of Soviet Jews to occupied Palestine.

In a statement issued today, Monday, at the end of the emergency meeting of the committee of Muslim experts set up to confront the dangers of the Zionist colonialist policy of settlement in Palestine and the occupied Arab territories held in Jeddah on 17 and 18 March, the ICO says that the displacement of Soviet Jews and their settling in Palestine was a blatent violation of Article 13 of the principles [as received] of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and a breach of UN Resolutions, Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention signed in 1949, and the Helsinki Accord, which guarantees freedom to choose a place of residence.

In its statement, the ICO adds: "The Islamic committee set up to confront the dangers of the Zionist policy of settlement affirms that the displacement of Soviet Jews and their settling in Palestine and the occupied Arab territories constitutes a serious threat to security and stability in the region."

The statement continues: "The displacement of the Jews alters the demographic situation in the interests of the colonialist policy of settlement followed by world Zionism and its attempts to control the region with a view to fulfilling its ambitions to establish the so-called Great Israel, and this increases the dangers facing the Palestinian people and the Arab and Islamic states, particularly those bordering Palestine."

The ICO statement also stresses that the displacement was thwarting the peace process and prolonging the atmosphere of tension, war, and suffering, a matter endangering international peace and security.

The statement points out that the committee considers the Soviet decision to open the doors to the Soviet Jews for organized collective emigration, which was taken simultaneously with a number of U.S. measures banning emigration into the U.S., the closure of the European stations that used to receive them, and also the pressure to open direct air and sea links with Israel, is an implementation of a Zionist scheme to relocate the Soviet Jews into Palestine and the occupied Arab territories and to settle them there.

The statement points out that this will lead to evacuating the Palestinian people by force from their land. The statement says that this is a violation of the UN resolutions and of international agreements and declarations on human rights.

The statement stresses that the committee is monitoring with concern the construction of more settlements in the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories for settling the Soviet Jewish emigrants.

The ICO calls on the United States, the Soviet Union, the international community, the United Nations, and all the peace-loving peoples to adopt the necessary measures to force the Israeli authorities to stop their brutal practices against the Palestinian people and to adhere to not settling the new emigrants in the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories.

ICO Asks France To Help Halt Jewish Emigration

LD1802234290 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1600 GMT 18 Feb 90

[Text] Jeddah, 18 Feb (SPA)—Dr. Hamid al-Ghabid, secretary general of the Islamic Conference Organization (ICO), met today at the organization headquarters with Jacques Bernard, French ambassador to Saudi Arabia.

During the meeting, they discussed a number of issues of common interest, particularly the question of the emigration of Soviet Jews to occupied Palestine and Israel's intention to settle these emigrants in the occupied Palestine territory.

Dr. al-Ghabid expressed his thanks and appreciation to France for its position supporting Palestinian rights and asked the French ambassador to convey to his government the will of the ICO to see France play an important role at the Security Council, where it is a permanent member, and also on other international scenes, in order to put an end to the illegitimate emigration of Soviet Jews to occupied Palestine and to find a just and comprehensive solution to the question of the Middle East and Palestine, which will guarantee the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people.

Palestinian Affairs

'Palestinian Embassy' Replies to Peres Statement

LD2003001390 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 2200 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] The Palestinian embassy in Algeria issued a statement today which stresses that the Palestinian people is one people with one leadership and that whoever wants to talk to the Palestinian people must contact the PLO, their leadership and the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Here are the details from colleague Djaouida:

[Djaouida] The statement issued today by the Palestinian embassy in Algeria is in reply to the statement given yesterday by Shimon Peres, leader of the Israeli Labor Party, to Egypt's Al-AHRAM in which he said that he is committed to the negotiations with the Palestinians of the occupied territories but not with the whole Palestinian people.

In this context, the embassy stresses in its statement that the Palestinian people is an indivisible single unit and also that peace is indivisible. If Israel wants a complete peace, it will have to negotiate with the Palestinian people and to be precise with the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people to any negotiations. This is if Israel has any real intention of achieving peace.

In its statement, the embassy describes Peres' statement to AL- AHRAM, in which he proposed changing the laws concerning the meetings between the Israelis and the PLO provided that these meetings are public, as containing a clear and scandalous contradiction between the beginning and the end of the statement. For while he does not recognize the unity of the Palestinian people and refuses to hold any negotiations except with a part of this people, he recognizes the PLO and recognizes the necessity of changing the Israeli laws to be able to negotiate publicly with it.

In conclusion, the embassy stresses that Peres and the whole world know that talking to the PLO means talking to the Palestinian people.

PLO Voices 'Satisfaction' With Carter Statements

JN1803191090 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1815 GMT 18 Mar 90

[Text] Tunis, 18 Mar (WAKH)—The PLO has expressed satisfaction over statements made by Jimmy Carter shortly before the former U.S. president departed Amman for the occupied Arab land today.

Fatah Central Committee Member Khalid al-Hasan said Carter's statements during a pre-departure news conference in Amman point to the right path to an equitable peace in the Middle East and to the attainment of Palestinian legitimate rights in keeping with the Palestinian peace plan embodied in the resolutions of the Palestine National Council [PNC] session in November in Algiers.

Al-Hasan, who is also in charge of foreign relations in the PNC, told WAKH in Tunis that he hoped Carter's visit to Israel would win support for his statements, in which case the former U.S. president could play a positive role upon his return to Washington when he reports to President Bush and Secretary Baker.

On Syrian-Palestinian relations, al-Hasan said Carter's statement quoting al-Asad indicates that the Palestinian issue is once again a top priority in Damascus. The time is right for an invitation to President Yasir 'Arafat to visit Damascus for official talks to normalize ties with Syria in the interest of fuller Arab cooperation toward the recovery of Arab land—including the Golan heights and Jerusalem—seized in 1967, al-Hasan added.

'News Analysis' on Collapse of Shamir Government

JN1703204090 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1743 GMT 17 Mar 90

["News analysis" by radio correspondent: "What Happens After the Shamir Government's Collapse?"]

[Text] Dear brothers: After the resounding collapse of terrorist Shamir's government—the coalition government that was incapable of making any decision after 15 months of governing—the Israeli entity's president, Hayim Herzog, will start tomorrow, Sunday, to hold contacts and negotiations with the two major parties, the Likud and Alignment, to form a new Israeli government. It is expected that Herzog will entrust Alignment leader Shim'on Peres with forming the government, since he has the largest parliamentary base in the Knesset. This doubles his chances of success in forming a new government with a majority of 70 voices, backed by the blocs of Ratz, Mapam, Shinuy, Shas, Agudat Yisra'el, Degel Hatora, and Charlie Biton's party, in addition to Hadash and the Mi'ari and Darawishah group.

In the event Labor Party leader Peres is unable to form a new government, there are three possibilities: First, the Likud succeeds in forming a new government; second, agreement is reached again to form a coalition government with the Alignment and Likud, which would sell out the small parties as part of an obscure deal, as happened in the last elections; third, the date for elections is advanced and the average Israeli is given the opportunity to once again have his say.

Even if Peres succeeds in forming a new government, this government will not be able to make any progress in the peace process because of Peres' announced positions, which totally reject negotiations with the PLO or a settlement on the basis of land for peace. The evidence is obvious from the positions, policies, and statements of Peres and other Labor Party leaders that they are no different from Shamir in refusing to give the peace process a push forward and recognize the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, foremost of which is their right to establish their independent state. Peres is no different from Shamir except in his unique ability to change color, to prevaricate, and to give the appearance of wanting and calling for peace.

At any rate, whether Peres or Shamir succeed or not in forming a government, the result for the peace process will be one and the same, so long as neither of these two parties shows any readiness to tread beyond the Camp David agreement framework.

Therefore, Washington has a great opportunity to prove its sincerity and retrieve some of its lost credibility. It can do so by seeing, in a comprehensive and objective manner, that the peace process has been deadlocked by Shamir and others, and should adopt practical policies based on the resolutions of international law to urge the leaders of the Israeli occupation to respect international opinion and hold the international conference, which is

today the only solution that can rescue the peace process from the deadlock Shamir has forced it into.

Dear brothers, I salute you, and farewell.

'Arafat Meets Israeli Peace Activist Abie Nathan

JN1703211090 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1928 GMT 17 Mar 90

[Text] Brother leader Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] met in Tunis yesterday with Israeli peace activist Abie Nathan, who exchanged views with the brother president.

Nathan said: I have come to you from Israel after spending 122 days in jail. I struggle for peace and against the law that bans meetings with PLO leaders.

Brother leader President Abu-'Ammar praised Nathan and told him that what he has done will never be forgotten by peace-lovers among the Palestinian people and the Israeli people and that his struggle will be appreciated by future generations because it is a courageous and noble struggle for the sake of peace in the region.

Algeria

President Bendjedid Congratulates Gorbachev

LD1603233190 Algiers Domestic Service in French 1800 GMT 16 Mar 90

[Text] A message of congratulations from Mr. Chadli Bendjedid, the president of the Republic, was sent to Mr. Gorbachev on the occasion of his election to the presidency of the Soviet federation. The president wishes the friendly Soviet people the greatest success in the policy of renewal to which it has committed itself.

Libya's Jallud Arrives in Algiers 18 Mar

Assails U.S. 'Veto' on Arab Nation

LD1803125490 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 18 Mar 90

[Text] Member of the Libyan Revolution Command Council Major 'Abd-al-Salam Jallud arrived in Algiers this morning. He was welcomed on arrival by Prime Minister Mouloud Hamrouche, senior officials of the Foreign Ministry, and the Libyan ambassador to Algeria. The Libyan official made the following statement on arrival at Algiers international airport:

[Begin recording] [Jallud] The points do not constitute a question mark regarding relations between Libya and Algeria, especially at this time when the world and the Arab nation are being threatened. The Arab nation is facing dangers that threaten its existence. Thus we always find ourselves in need of discussing these issues with our brothers in Algeria.

[Reporter] Mr. Jallud, the issue which is now preoccupying the Libyan Jamahiriyah and all the states is the question of the al-Rabitah plant. We would like to know the circumstances regarding the fire at this plant and the accusations directed against the Bonn Government, the Jamahiriyah attitude now, and what are the states involved in this, and so on.

[Jallud] There is a decision in Washington to impose a veto on the Arab nation: a veto on unity; a veto on the liberation of Palestine; a veto on socialism; a veto on progress; even a veto on the transfer of technology. Naturally, the West wants us to continue to be its market, so they do not want to see any transfer of technology, especially in the field of medicine. The question is not a question of the al-Rabitah plant. They use these things as excuses for carrying out aggression against us because Libya now raises the standard of unity, liberation, and resistance to America. [end recording]

Meets With President Benjedid

LD1903154890 Algiers APS in English 1000 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Algiers, 13 March (APS)—Commander 'Abd-al-Salam Jallud, special envoy of the Libyan leader, Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, paid yesterday a few hour visit to Algiers. The member of the command of the Libyan revolution who was received soon after his arrival by President Chadli Bendjedid, conferred with the head of state on various question the Arab nation is facing and the transformation taking place in the world.

Commander Jallud declared after his arrival to Algiers that the meetings between Algeria and Libya fall in the frame of consultations mainly at these moments when serious dangers are theatering the Arab nation. Jallud added that it was Libya which was aimed through the destruction of the al-Rabitah plant.

The al-Rabitah plant, he added, "is known. It was built by Western companies and its equipments come from the USA and it is known that thus factory only produces medicine. So all the accusations against Libya are only armed at justifiying the aggression it has been victim of".

It is worth recalling that Jallud was welcomed and seen off, at the airport by Prime Minister Mouloud Hamrouche.

More on Meeting With Bendjedid

LD1903223390 Algiers Television Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 18 Mar 90

[Text] Today the president had a meeting with Major 'Abd-al-Salam Jallud, special envoy of Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi. The meeting took place in the presence of Mouloud Hamrouche, head of the government, and also the secretary of the Libyan Brotherhood Bureau in Algiers.

After this meeting 'Abd-al-Salam Jallud spoke about the dimensions and framework within which this visit takes place. He said:

[Begin recording] [Jallud] This meeting is like the other meetings which take place between the revolution in Libya and the revolution in Algeria. We discussed urgent issues affecting Arabs and the Arab nation. There is no doubt that with the great changes taking place in the world, we can rely only on our own strength and our masses to face up to the dangers and achieve our hopes.

[Question] Was the issue of the al-Rabitah factory discussed during this meeting?

[Jallud] No it was not, but the brother president inquired about it, and expressed his regrets, but the issue was not discussed. [end recording]

Meets Hamrouche, FLN Chief

LD1903223790 Tripoli JANA in English 1858 GMT 18 Mar 90

[Text] Algiers, al-Rabia [March] 18, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—Staff Major 'Abd-al-Salam Ahmad Jallud met this afternoon at his residence with Abdelhamid Mehri, the secretary general of the FLN, and the Algerian prime minister Mouloud Hamrouche.

The meeting, attended by the secretary of the Libyan Arab Brotherhood Bureau to Algiers, discussed the positive development of fraternal relations between Great Jamahiriyah and sisterly Algeria as well as topics on Arab and international scenes.

Concludes Visit, Departs 18 Mar

LD1903224190 Tripoli JANA in English 1900 GMT 18 Mar 90

[Text] Algiers, al-Rabia [March] 18, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—Staff Major 'Abd-al-Salam Ahmad Jallud this evening left Algerian prime minister Mouloud Hamrouche and the secretary and members of the Libyan Arab Bureau of Brotherhood to sisterly Algeria.

FLN Central Committee Communique Issued

LD1603162990 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 0600 GMT 16 Mar 90

[Text] After two days of discussion held in closed sessions, the FLN [National Liberation Front] Central Committee late yesterday ended its extraordinary open session, which opened at the beginning of this month. The announcement of the end of this session was crowned with a final communique, which consisted of a political resolution, and a recommendation addressed to the Political Bureau to define the stance of the Front toward the issues which concern Algerian society. The final communique also consisted of an appeal to FLN militants and to all Algerians to participate with full awareness and responsibility in the awaited municipal and provincial elections, which represent a point of qualitative change in the political life of Algerian society. The communique also calls for vigilance and self-confidence to block those who want to subjugate the Algerian revolution and prompt it to adopt easy paths such as rescheduling debts and enabling speculators to impose their control on the national economy under the pretext of economic liberalism.

It was decided in the final closed session to postpone technical issues, including the election of the Committee for Finance and the Committee for Control, to next June's session.

Egypt

Bush-Mubarak Phone Call on Al-Rabitah Incident

NC1703135290 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1320 GMT 17 Mar 90

[Text] Cairo, 17 Mar (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak held a lengthy telephone conversation with U.S. President George Bush this afternoon. MENA has learned that the two presidents reviewed developments in the Middle East situation and ways to advance the peace process. They also discussed the economic cooperation between the two countries.

During the telephone conversation, President Bush told President Mubarak that he had nothing to do with what has recently taken place in the Libyan Jamahiriyah, despite the U.S. rejection—previously announced—of any industries which might have to do with chemical weapons.

Italian Foreign Minister Arrives in Cairo 17 Mar

NC1703190290 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1825 GMT 17 Mar 90

[Excerpt] Cairo, 17 Mar (MENA)—Italian Foreign Minister Gianni de Michelis and the delegation accompanying him arrived in Cairo this evening on board a private plane on a one-day visit.

Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, who received him at the airport stated that the visit has its special significance for bilateral relations. He added that President Husni Mubarak will receive the Italian minister later tonight. [passage omitted]

Meets With Mubarak

NC1703190490 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 17 Mar 90

[Text] President Husni Mubarak received Italian Foreign Minister Gianni de Michelis tonight. The meeting was attended by Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister; and the Italian ambassador in Cairo.

Following the one hour meeting, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said the discussions dealt with Egyptian-Italian relations which are unique and important. The discussions also dealt with the situation in the region and with Egypt's relations with the EC and EEC. He added that the Italian minister expressed his government's appreciation for President Mubarak's policy and the desire to achieve stability and peace in the area.

Dr 'Abd-al-Majid said that Italy has a prominent role in the Mediterranean Sea area and that relations with it and with the EC are strong. He added: We felt the Italian foreign minister's desire to underline and develop these relations so as to achieve peace, stability, and development. He said also that Italy will chair the EC in July and this will be an opportunity to further promote relations between Egypt and the EC and to bolster any efforts that would lead to increased cooperation between the Arab countries and the EC and to an activation of the Arab-European dialogue which has reached a new stage since the Paris meeting in September.

'Exclusive Statement' on Talks

NC1803102390 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0930 GMT 18 Mar 90

[Excerpts] Cairo, 18 Mar (MENA)—Italian Foreign Minister Gianni de Michelis has expressed his appreciation of Egypt's important role, noting the respect it enjoys not only by the Arab countries but also by the Mediterranean countries. In an exclusive statement to

MENA, de Michelis described his talks with President Mubarak yeesterday as constructive and fruitful. [passage omitted]

De Michelis said that he discussed with President Mubarak and Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, the special cooperation between the two countries in various fields. He stressed that Italy will give stronger support and backing to Egypt in the international arena and convey its views both in Brussels, the EEC Headquarters, and the IMF.

De Michelis said he discussed a number of regional and international issues with President Mubarak, particularly the Libyan issue and the Palestinian problem. He emphasized that both countries' views on these problems are close and stressed the need to continue efforts to support the recent positive developments in the Libyan regime.

De Michelis said both parties expressed their hope that the Israeli-Palestinian dialogue will begin in the near future as a step on the road to negotiations and peace. He said he will not visit Israel at present, but after a new Israeli government is formed.

De Michelis expressed his country's support for President Mubarak's efforts and for U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's proposals to establish peace in the Middle East. He stressed that Italy will try to exercise pressure directly or through the EEC on Israel and the PLO to agree to a framework for beginning negotiations. He expressed his hopes that the new Israeli government will accept Baker's proposals and adopt a positive stand on negotiations between Palestinian and Israeli delegations. He pointed out that Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat will visit Italy in April. He noted that the EEC will discuss the Middle East problem during its meetings in Brussels on 1 April. [passage omitted]

De Michelis expressed his country's concern about the emigration of Soviet Jews to the occupied territory, noting that the EEC adopts the same stand. He said this issue can be an obstacle to the peace process in the Middle East.

Asked about news agencies' reports that the Italian Government was one of the first countries to learn about the incident at the Libyan al-Rabitah plant, which was completely burned, de Michelis stated that his country learned of it from a Tunisian official who was visting Rome. He said he cannot express his views on this issue now because he has no correct or precise information and cannot confirm the causes of the incident.

Concluding his statement, de Michelis expressed his country's desire that Libya should join the Geneva agreement on the use of chemical weapons. He expressed his hope to hear a clear statement in this respect from Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi.

'Abd-al-Majid Comments

NC1803123590 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1206 GMT 18 Mar 90

[Excerpt] Cairo, 18 Mar (MENA)—Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has stated that the talks he held today with Italian Foreign Minister Gianni de Michelis were fruitful and successful and that their views were identical on the political issues they discussed. He pointed out that the Italian party stressed Italy's eagerness to promote ties in all fields. He said that Egypt appreciates Italy's contribution to Egyptian development projects, noting that Italy plays a basic role in this area in addition to its role within the EC framework.

'Abd-al-Majid said that the EC countries have decided to appropriate one percent of their national income for cooperation with Third World countries. He said that one-fourth of this will be allocated to development projects in the Mediterranean countries. The portion allocated to the Mediterranean countries totals $15 billion, and this contribution by the EC is of interest to Egypt. [passage omitted]

Confers With Sidqi, Departs 18 Mar

NC1803184590 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 18 Mar 90

[Text] Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi held talks with the Italian foreign minister today. Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, and Dr. 'Atif 'Ubayd, minister of cabinet affairs and minister of state for administrative development, were both present. Dr. Sidqi stated that the Italian foreign minister praised the close ties between Egypt and Italy and Egypt's leading role in the Mediterranean region.

Dr. Sidqi went on to say that the Italian foreign minister said during the talks that Italy has decided to place $150 million at Egypt's disposal immediately to finance any projects in the Egyptian development plan. In his statement, Dr. Sidqi lauded Italy's supportive stand at the international financing organizations, including the IMF and the World Bank. Dr. Sidqi commended Egyptian-Italian cooperation in various areas.

In another development, the Italian foreign minister held a news conference at noon today. He said that he has extended an official invitation to President Mubarak to visit Italy either in October or November. He noted that his talks with Egyptian officials dealt with the various Middle East problems, foremost being the Palestinian issue; the Gulf war; and the situation in Lebanon. He added that Italy supports President Mubarak's efforts and 10-point plan which aim to advance the peace process. He emphasized that Italy is ready to contribute toward peace efforts. He said he is ready to visit Israel if the latter is prepared to accept the peace efforts.

During his news conference, the Italian foreign minister lauded Italian-Egyptian relations and affirmed that joint

work committees to promote various kinds of cooperation will be established. He pointed out that the EC member states decided to earmark $15 billion for participating in the development projects of the Mediterranean countries.

[At 1820 GMT on 18 March, Cairo MENA in Arabic adds, "Italian Foreign Minister Gianni de Michelis and his accompanying delegation left Cairo this evening after a one-day visit to Egypt."]

Arab League Official Arrives in Cairo 19 Mar

NC1903133490 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1240 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Cairo, 19 Mar (MENA)—Lakhdar Ibrahimi, Arab League assistant secretary general, arrived in Cairo from Beirut this afternoon on a visit.

MENA has learned that Ibrahimi will meet with Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, on Tuesday noon to discuss the latest developments in the situation in Lebanon.

Soviet Interior Ministry Delegation Arrives

NC1803144490 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1425 GMT 18 Mar 90

[Text] Cairo, 18 Mar (MENA)—A Soviet delegation led by (Boris Kyriakov), deputy Soviet minister of internal affairs, arrived in Cairo this afternoon to visit Egypt for one week.

The Soviet official will participate in the four-day international traffic conference on protection from accidents and safety in developing countries which starts in Cairo tomorrow. He stated that he will also hold talks during this visit with Egyptian Interior Ministry officials on bilateral relations.

Soviet Ambassador Returns From Moscow, Comments

NC1803144690 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1430 GMT 18 Mar 90

[Text] Cairo, 18 Mar (MENA)—Soviet Ambassador in Cairo Gennadiy Kirillovich Zhuravlev has stated that he is carrying a message to President Husni Mubarak from Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev in reply to President Mubarak's message to the Soviet president.

In a statement he made on his return to Cairo today from Moscow at the end of a two-week visit, the Soviet ambassador said that while in Moscow, he attended the CPSU Central Committee meetings which elected Gorbachav the first president of the Soviet Union. He expressed the Soviet leaders' satisfaction with relations between Egypt and the Soviet Union, noting the two countries' positive trends and identity of views.

He added that the next meeting of the CPSU Central Committee in July will discuss drawing up a charter and by-laws for the party and will also hold sweeping changes in the Central Committee and in all the state sectors.

Syrian Official on Reopening Embassy in Cairo

JN1703090990 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 14 Mar 90 pp 6

[Text] Badr-al-Din Farhat, Syrian assistant foreign minister for administrative affairs, left Cairo for Damascus at the end of a visit to Egypt that lasted several days.

The Syrian official discussed with Egyptian Foreign Ministry officials the final arrangements for reopening the Egyptian and Syrian embassies in the two capitals. He said that the Syrian Embassy in Cairo will be reopened very soon, and that his visit to Cairo was successful.

PLO's Al-Surani Meets Foreign Minister, Comments

NC1703150990 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1405 GMT 17 Mar 90

[Text] Cairo, 17 Mar (MENA)—Today Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, met with a Palestinian delegation comprising PLO Executive Committee member Jamal al-Surani, Palestinian Ambassador in Cairo Sa'id Kamal, and Fatah representative in Cairo Zuhdi al-Qidrah.

Following the meeting, al-Surani said that Egyptian-Palestinian relations are fraternal and good and not subject to discussion or debate. He added that differences in views that occur from time to time are like differences in a family.

Al-Surani said that the decision to return the Arab League Headquarters to Cairo was a unanimous one and that Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, read the decision during the meeting of the Arab foreign ministers in his capacity as chairman of the council session.

Replying to a question on the cabinet crisis in Israel and its effect on the peace process, the PLO official said the Palestinians are waiting to see what events will bring. He expressed his belief that the other side is trying to gain time as it is continuing to move people, its settlement activities, and to change the character of Jerusalem. He added: There is no difference between Yitzhaq Shamir and Shim'or Peres. Both reject the partition of Jerusalem and say no to the Palestinian state, no to self-determination, and no to the international conference. He stressed there are no differences in Israeli partisan actions, only in how they articulate them.

Al-Surani went on to say: The Israelis are impeding the process of settlement, which I do not want to call a peace settlement because one who develops his missiles, nuclear weapons, and all other weapons and who brings in immigrants from abroad and conducts daily raids on Lebanon is not thinking of peace. He then asked: Where

is this peace? Peace is life and a daily practice. He added: We seek peace and support peace, but the other side is against it.

President Mubarak Departs for African Tour 18 Mar

NC1803072090 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0640 GMT 18 Mar 90

[Excerpt] Cairo, 18 Mar (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak left Cairo this morning for Uganda on the first leg of a tour during which he will visit Zambia and Namibia. The delegation accompanying President Mubarak includes Dr. Butrus Ghali, minister of state for foreign affairs; Zakariya 'Azmi, head of the President's Bureau; and Dr. Usamah al-Baz, who is currently in Lusaka. [passage omitted]

Leader of Al-Minya 'Extremist Groups' Jailed

JN1703094990 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 14 Mar 90 p 13

[By Hajjaj al-Husayni in al-Minya]

[Text] It has transpired that the leader of the al-Minya extremist groups Muhammad Muhammad 'Ali 'Uthman, nicknamed Muhammad Abu-Tabanjah, 30, was jailed for 15 days. He has been in prison since Thursday on charges of resisting the authorities brought against him by head of prosecution Ahmad Shiha.

'Uthman, the owner of a bakery, was ambushed by security forces while riding a motorcycle with his friend Muhsin Fawzi 'Abd-al-Qadir on al-Minya road east of Tallah. He tried to escape, but was later caught. His friend sustained a bullet injury and is being treated in the general hospital of al-Minya; he has not been interrogated.

In another development, a number of extremists yesterday smashed the glass front of the Shamali pharmacy in al-Husayn street. Two perpetrators were arrested by police.

Interior Minister Says Asyut, Al-Minya 'Calm'

NC1803153490 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1527 GMT 18 Mar 90

[Text] Cairo, 18 Mar (MENA)—Interior Minister Muhammad 'Abd-al-Halim Musa has affirmed that the security situation in Asyut and al-Minya is calm and that the situation in the two governorates is stable following the recent events there which threatened communal insurrection among Muslims and Copts.

In a statement to correspondents today, the interior minister also stressed the strength of national unity in Egypt. He said that Muslims and Copts have lived together for thousands of years without anything happening to upset security in Egypt. He said that what took place recently was no more than a transient incident which cannot destabilize the secure and stable situation in Egypt.

Libya

'Staff' Behind Al-Rabitah Fire; Arrests Made

AU1903171290 Paris AFP in English 1626 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Rome, March 19 (AFP)—A fire that devastated a Libyan chemical plant last week was started deliberately by a member of the plant's technical staff, the Libyan ambassador to Italy said here Monday. The United States has accused Libya of manufacturing chemical weapons at the plant in al-Rabitah, northern Libya, a charge denied by the Libyans.

Ambassador 'Abd-al-Rahman Shalqam told reporters here that the fire, which "caused large-scale damage", was started by an act of sabotage by "a member of the plant's technical staff". "A few suspicious people have been arrested," he said, without indicating their number or nationality. Some 100 foreigners work at the plant, he said. He said West Germany could have been behind the fire, as West German companies had helped to build the plant and only people with detailed knowledge of its operation could have sabotaged it.

Libyan authorities also suspect the United States and Israel, he said. Investigators said the saboteurs had used highly sophisticated equipment to make the fire look like an accident, he added.

Envoy to Rome on 'Sabotage'

AU2003091290 Rome ANSA in English 0804 GMT 20 Mar 90

[Text] (ANSA) Rome [no date as received]—Last week's fire at the Libyan chemical complex in al-Rabitah where, according to the United States, the production of chemical weapons had been resumed, was discussed by the Libyan ambassador to Rome, 'Abd-al-Rahman Shalqam, who spoke of "sabotage" and pointed the finger at the United States and Israel.

He said Libya also suspected West Germany of having a hand in the act of sabotage, "from a technical point of view," because of that nation's primary role in the construction of the plant and knowledge of its workings.

The fire caused "damages of great proportions," the ambassador told a press conference convened for an update on the incident. "This is a case of a highly dangerous attack which is perhaps a part of a program of sabotage, the scale of which we do not know," said Shalqam.

The preliminary investigation at the site indicated that the person materially responsible for setting the blaze was "a member of the plant's technical staff. Some suspects have been detained," he added without disclosing their number or identity.

Investigators are in possession of evidence that "very sophisticated equipment" was used "so as to make the act of sabotage look like an accident."

The ambassador said that though his country opposes the death penalty, the person or persons responsible for the al-Rabitah fire "will be executed at the site where the fire took place."

Asked about recent statements made by Libyan leader Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi on Italy, the ambassador said he was referring to events in al-Rabitah in "stressing that in this case Italy did not seek a role either as defense attorney or as judge" but tried "the method of dialogue as a solution for problems."

Shalqam went on to say that his country "is always careful to maintain good relations with Italy, a country which plays an important role in Mediterranean stability (and which), as opposed to others, has not sought to impose its domination on third world nations."

Returning to the issue of Libyan demands for Italian compensation for the colonial period, between 1912 and World War II, the ambassador said that, "we cannot abolish an historic truth" and asserted that, "Fascism did to Libya what Nazism did to the Jews." Tripoli, however, is prepared to work for a solution which will "close this negative page in relations between the two countries," said the diplomat.

Back on the issue of the chemical plant fire, the ambassador said there were no Italians working at the complex but there were about one hundred foreigners on the staff. "Al-Rabitah is a great industrial complex which has never been a secret and which produced ferrous goods, plastics, petrochemicals and medicines. We have always accepted and continue to accept the possibility of inspection on condition that this principle applies to everyone," said Shalqam.

Plant 'Virtually Undamaged'

AU1903211290 Paris AFP in English 1913 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Excerpt] Toulouse, France, March 19 (AFP)—The chemical plant at al-Rabitah, near the Libyan capital Tripoli, was virtually undamaged after a fire last week, French satellite pictures show. The company Spot Image said that photographs taken by its Spot-1 satellite on Sunday showed scorch marks on the outside walls of a few small ancillary buildings thought to be storehouses, but otherwise the plant seemed to have suffered no substantial damage.

In Rome earlier, the Libyan ambassador to Italy said that the plant, which the United States has said is a disguised chemical weapons factory, suffered "large-scale damage" in the fire.

Christian Bernard, head of Spot Image's international section, said after analysing the photographs: "the main units of the al-Rabitah factory do not appear to have been touched, and there are no traces on the ground suggesting that a fire took place." He went on: "If you judge by the overall appearance, nothing happened at al-Rabitah." A small fire might have occurred over an area 200 metres square (700 feet square) situated 800 metres (half a mile) from the main building, he said.

The photographs were taken at 1000 GMT on Sunday from a height of 830 kilometres (about 520 miles) with a resolution of 10 metres (33 feet), Mr. Bernard said, adding: "we cannot provide more details." [passage omitted]

Signing of Chemical Weapons Treaties Recalled

LD1903151990 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1400 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Tripoli, 19 Mar (JANA)—Replying to a question by JANA about the remarks made by Italian Foreign Minister Gianni de Michelis yesterday in Cairo to MENA, a source at the People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation recalled the Great Jamahiriyah's previous stands in regard of the question of banning the production, storage, and use of all kinds of chemical weapons.

The source said: The Great Jamahiryah 29 (?February) 1971 signed the Geneva agreements of 1925 regarding the banning of the use of chemical and bacteriological weapons. On 19 January 1982 it also signed the international agreement banning the production, development, and storage of bacteriological and toxic weapons and their destruction. The Great Jamahiriyah also actively participated in the Paris conference on banning chemical weapons and officially welcomed the Soviet-U.S. communique issued on 10 February 1990 in Moscow on the agreement of the two countries' foreign ministers on the necessity to eliminate chemical weapons in the world and their intention to work towards the signing and implementation of a multilateral agreement banning the production and use of chemical weapons and the destruction of their stockpiles at the internal level.

Concluding its reply to the agency question, the source reiterates the Great Jamahiriyah's preparedness to join any international agreement to be concluded and signed by the international community in this regard.

PLO's 'Arafat Meets With Al-Qadhdhafi

JN1903175090 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Brother President Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], president of the state of Palestine, met with brother Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the 1 September Revolution. They exchanged views on the political situation and the dangers threatening the region, foremost of which are the American threats. The brother president also reviewed the conditions of the intifadah inside the occupied territories and its escalation and continuation. In addition, they discussed the effect of the sacred stone on the enemy and the immigration of Jews to Palestine.

Brother President Abu-'Ammar stressed that our people and our leaders stand by the Great Jamahiriyah and its

strugeling people under brother Col. Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi. The brother leader warmly thanked brother President Abu-'Ammar for his visit at this particular time and for the support of the Palestinian people and their leaders for the Great Jamahiriyah during these difficult times. He also praised the heroism of the intifadah and the struggle of the Palestinian people, who will certainly achieve victory.

The meeting was attended by brothers Abu-al-Hawl [Hayil 'Abd-al-Hamid] and Hakam Bal'awi, members of the Fatah Central Committee, and brother 'Izzat Abu-al-Rub, ambassador of the state of Palestine to the Great Jamahiriyah.

Before leaving Libya, Abu-'Ammar made the following statement: I, as well as my brothers, were pleased with our meeting with the brother leader this morning. I informed him, on behalf of the Palestinian leadership and people, of the support of the Palestinian men, women, children, and elderly for the brother leader, for Libya, and for the Libyan people against American threats. I also expressed our readiness to place the modest capabilities of the Palestinian people and the PLO at Libya's disposal. We have nothing but our blood. We offer our blood to our brothers, the struggling Libyan people, against these threats. I say to them that we are together for better or worse and that Palestinian blood is at the disposal of brother leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, not only in defense of Palestine, but in defense of both Palestine and Libya and the Arab nation, from the ocean to the Gulf. We will pray together in Jerusalem, God willing.

Sudan's Khalifah Heads Delegation to Tripoli

LD1603230390 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1900 GMT 16 Mar 90

[Text] Tripoli, 16 Mar (JANA)—Major Muhammad al-Amin Khalifah, member of the fraternal Sudanese Revolution Command Council for National Salvation, and his accompanying delegation arrived in Tripoli midday today on a visit to the Great Jamahiriyah. He was welcomed upon arrival by Colonel Abu-Bakr Yunis Jabir.

Meets With Al-Qadhdhafi

LD1703190490 Tripoli Voice of Greater Arab Homeland in Arabic 1230 GMT 17 Mar 90

[Text] The brother leader of the revolution today received Colonel Muhammad al-Amin Khalifah Yunis, member of the Revolution Command Council and chairman of the conference of national dialogue in sister Sudan, who handed him a written message from Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir, chairman of the Revolution Command Council.

Bahrain

PRC Foreign Minister Arrives on Visit 18 Mar

JN1803165190 Manama WAKH in English 1635 GMT 18 Mar 90

[Text] Manama, March 18 (GNA)—Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen arrived here today from Abu Dhabi on a two-day visit to Bahrain as part of a regional tour.

While here Mr Qian will hold discussions with Bahraini Foreign Minister Shaykh Muhammad Ibn-Mubarak Al Khalifah on promoting bilateral relations in various fields and current Gulf, Arab and international issues.

In a statement to GULF NEWS AGENCY, the Chinese foreign minister said he will discuss with the Bahraini officials means of developing bilateral relations and exchange views on international issues of mutual concern.

Meets With Foreign Minister

JN1803204290 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1730 GMT 18 Mar 90

[Text] Manama, 18 Mar (WAKH)—Bahraini Foreign Minister Shaykh Muhammad Ibn-Mubarak Al Khalifah met in Manama today with PRC Foreign Minister Qian Qichen, currently visiting Bahrain as part of a tour of states in the region.

An official source told WAKH that, during the meeting, the Bahraini and PRC sides discussed a number of issues of mutual concern, particularly those related to improving existing commercial and economic relations between the two countries and means to improve them for the benefit of the two countries.

The source added that the two sides discussed the situation in the Gulf region and efforts to boost the peace process between Iraq and Iran in light of UN efforts and the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 598.

The source said the two sides discussed the situation in the Middle East and developments in Arab affairs, namely, the threat of Soviet Jewish emigration to the occupied Arab territories, and the international measures that must be taken to face this illegitimate immigration and its negative consequences for the peace process.

According to the source, the two sides also discussed the latest developments in East Europe and their impact on international relations.

The following attended on the Bahraini side: 'Ali Ibrahim al-Mahrus, head of the Political Department; Dr. Sulayman al-Saffar, head of the Economic Department; Husayn Rashid al-Sabbagh, Bahrain's ambassador to the PRC; and Muhammad 'Abd-al-Ghaffar, adviser at the Ministry. The delegation accompanying the visiting minister and the PRC ambassador to Bahrain attended on the PRC side.

Meets With Crown Prince

JN1903171190 Manama WAKH in English 1540 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Manama, March 19 (GNA)—Bahraini Crown Prince and Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Force Shaykh Hamad Ibn-'Isa Al Khalifah received here today Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China Mr. Qian Qichen.

Shaykh Hamad during the meeting reviewed with the Chinese minister current international issues and matters of common interest. Shaykh Hamad reiterated Bahrain's desire to set up good relations with friendly countries based on mutual respect and development of relations in various fields. He also affirmed Bahrain is following up the current changes in the world and its impact on the international relations.

The meeting was attended by the Foreign Minister Shaykh Muhammad Ibn-Mubarak Al Khalifah, head of the Crown Prince's Court Shaykh Khalid Ibn-Ahmad Al Khalifah, Bahraini Ambassador to China Husayn al-Sabbagh and Chinese Charge d'Affaires to Bahrain Zhang Weqiu.

Delivers Message to Amir

JN1903171890 Manama WAKH in English 1550 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Manama, March 19 (GNA)—H.H. [His Highness] the Amir of Bahrain Shaykh 'Isa Ibn-Salman Al Khalifah received a written message from President of People's Republic of China Yang Shangkun, dealing with China's desire to develop cooperation between the two countries. It also included an invitation to H.H. the amir to visit China.

The message was conveyed to H.H. the amir by Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen, who is currently visiting Bahrain.

The meeting was attend by Bahraini Prime Minister Shaykh Khalifah Ibn-Salman Al Khalifah.

Holds News Conference

JN1903194190 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1850 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Excerpts] Manama, 19 Mar (WAKH)—PRC Foreign Minister Qian Qichen in a news conference here today said his visit to Bahrain had been successful and productive. [passage omitted]

Asked how the PRC viewed the Iraq-Iran situation, the foreign minister replied by calling for Iraqi-Iranian negotiations and direct contacts to implement all the clauses of Security Council Resolution 598 to establish peace in the region. He also declared his support for the efforts exerted by the UN secretary general in this area.

On his country's stance toward the emigration of Soviet Jews into occupied Palestine, Mr. Qian Qichen said his country objects to the emigration of a large number of

Soviet Jews to the occupied Arab territories. He said this constitutes a violation of international law and hampers the peace efforts in the Middle East. He said the PRC will support the Arab countries when this issue is raised in the Security Council. [passage omitted]

Departs for Bombay

JN1903203790 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1930 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Excerpt] Manama, 19 Mar (WAKH)—PRC Foreign Minister Qian Qichen and his delegation left Manama tonight for Bombay following a two-day visit to Bahrain as part of his tour of a number of countries in the region. [passage omitted]

Kuwait

AL-QABAS Assails Western 'Anti-Iraq Storm'

JN1803185890 Kuwait AL-QABAS in Arabic 16 Mar 90 p 1

[Editorial: "A Boring Story Repeated"]

[Text] The same story is being monotonously and boringly repeated. An Arab country, seeking to safeguard its independent decisionmaking by shedding the yoke of enslavement imposed by the world's monopolies of arms production and to develop its own technological and scientific capabilities, is being singled out by the big power club as a target for threats, browbeating, and slander.

Information from Western sources has confirmed something is being hatched against vital Iraqi targets. There are parties counting the hours and minutes to the implementation of this aggressive operation.

Iraq is protected by the fists of its own sons; it is not an easy morsel in the mouth of anyone. Nor is it a target deprived of the power to defend itself. Iraq is capable of turning any adventure against it into a catastrophe for those who might mastermind such an adventure. Our confidence in Iraq's ability to defend itself and its interests, however, does not prevent us from commenting on the way the West in general handles any Arab attempt at self- improvement. This is shown by the inflammatory information provided by the West. Such inflammatory information usually is followed by threatening statements from Tel Aviv.

Does the West have the right to raise all this clamor against Iraq, and why? Why does the West have the right to manufacture whatever quantities of destructive weapons it pleases? Why does it allow Israel and South Africa to produce weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear arms, and seek to prevent other countries, including Arab states from doing so?

The arrogant Western view has not changed. The growing East-West detente has ended the cold war and the competition for spheres of influence over the globe. This has opened the door, however, for a a different type of war. It is the war of economic competition for sharing hegemony over world markets. This requires that certain world states remain as satellites revolving in the orbit of big powers that consume their commodities and products.

As for Israel and South Africa, they are spared this fate, because they are both required to play the role of policemen for the West in their respective regions. They hence are permitted to possess the weapons that allow them to play this planned role.

Within this context, we can understand the anti-Iraq storm, whether this storm concerns threats to strike at its vital targets or falsehoods that seek to tarnish its image in the world, or to prevent it from implementing its laws against all those who attempt to encroach on the security of its installations with the aim of serving the interests of its enemies and the enemies of the Arabs.

The world, however, understands a historical fact; namely, the people who have walked the path of liberation will not be stopped by campaigns, however strong they might be. The West must learn to treat us as equals and not as slaves.

Prime Minister on Return to Parliamentary Rule

LD1903142790 Kuwait KUNA in English 1042 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Kuwait, March 19, (KUNA)—H.H. [His Highness] Crown Prince and Premier Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim Al Sabah Monday said that he perceived, during meetings and contacts with citizens, a general wish for laying down certain rules and regulations for the return of the parliamentary life.

His highness, in a statement to KUNA, said that the public had asked for those regulations in order "to ensure constructive cooperation between the constitutional authorities and to boost national unity and internal front so that all would work jointly for the service of our dear nation and for its stability and welfare away from any agitations or crisis that may impede our parliamentary march."

Shaykh Sa'd expressed appreciation for the spirit of fraternal amity and positive frankness that prevailed throughout his meetings with various citizens and for their declared preparedness for genuine cooperation so that Kuwait's interests would be above all any other considerations.

The crown prince and premier affirmed his unwavering belief in civilizational dialogue as "the means to develop our internal life and we, as H.H. the amir said, will not be able to continue our march without national dialogue including the flexibility of give and take, tabling and exchanging views and discussing them within the framework of the one Kuwaiti family."

"Any other methods, [words indistinct] direct meetings and brotherly would not lead us to the goal aspired by all," his highness emphasized.

Shaykh Sa'd underlined he will continue meetings with citizens, which hopefully will conclude within the few coming weeks, after which the conclusions will be presented to H.H. the amir.

Saudi Arabia

Joint Statement Issued on Saddam Husayn's Visit

JN1803194490 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1707 GMT 18 Mar 90

["Text" of statement issued on Iraqi President Saddam Husayn's visit to Saudi Arabia; date and place not given]

[Text] At the invitation extended to His Excellency President Saddam Husayn by his brother King Fahd Ibn-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, His Excellency Saddam Husayn, president of the fraternal Republic of Iraq, paid an official visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from 20 to 21 Sha'ban, 1410 Hegira, corresponding to 17 to 18 March 1990. His excellency and his delegation were received by King Fahd and the Saudi Government and people in a manner expressing sincerity, warmth, and brotherly feelings toward Iraq—its leader, government, and people.

During the visit His Excellency President Saddam Husayn and his brother King Fahd conducted talks in Hafr al-Batin on bilateral relations, which are growing steadily and are distinguished by their religious, historic, cultural, and educational ties that also are being promoted by language, good neighborliness, a sense of common destiny, and efforts to adhere to all these values and their effect on the present and future relations between the two fraternal countries in the political, economic, educational, and social areas.

In this context, the two leaders expressed their full and deep satisfaction with these relations, which are characterized by natural development in ties between the two countries' leaderships and peoples to realize their deep and serious desire by making these relations an example to be followed by the brothers in terms of solidarity, unity of the word, and unity of the ranks to bolster the two leaders' goals of achieving security in the region, keeping the it free of attempts to undermine the security and stability of the Arabian Gulf States and countries, and confronting these attempts to enable its sons to devote their time to building their present and future in a comprehensive peaceful atmosphere, and protecting their national achievements.

On bilateral relations, the two leaders stressed their joint desire to bolster Iraqi-Saudi cooperation in line with the brotherly relations that tie them personally and that are originally aimed at serving the mutual interests of their two countries and their fraternal peoples. The two leaders also discussed Arab, Islamic, and international issues and repeated that their visions and views on these issue are identical.

Saudi Arabia in this respect expressed its concern over the current state of affairs between Iraq and Iran since the cease-fire was reached by the two sides. At the same time, Iraq under His Excellency President Saddam Husayn has launched more than one peace initiative, which have not received any positive response from the Iranian side. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Republic of Iraq believe this stagnation will continue unless direct and real negotiations start to implement Security Council Resolution 598 issued on 20 July 1987 as a peace plan according to the agreement reached on 8 August 1988.

The Iraqi and the Saudi sides stressed the need for a comprehensive exchange of the prisoners of war, especially after military operations have been suspended, to put an end to the suffering of the prisoners as soon as possible according to the provisions of the law and in compliance with the 1949 Geneva agreement and the measures proposed by the International Committee of the Red Cross to exchange the lists of names and return the prisoners to their homeland as part of a comprehensive exchange. Priority should be given to registering and exchanging the sick and the wounded.

Regarding the Lebanese crisis, His Excellency President Saddam Husayn praised the efforts of his brother King Fahd to achieve Lebanon's unity and sovereignty.

The two leaders reviewed the Palestine question, expressing appreciation for the efforts of the PLO—the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people—and full support for the establishment of the independent Palestinian state in the occupied Palestinian territories through the popular intifadah. The intifadah has opened the eyes of world opinion to Israel's misleading claims it seeks peace, while in fact, it practices all sorts of injustice, opression, and terrorism against the Palestinian people on their land.

The Saudi and Iraqi sides stressed the importance of holding the international peace conference to end the Arab-Israeli conflict. The conference should be convened with the attendance of the Security Council permanent member states and the participation of the parties to the conflict, including the PLO. They also pointed out the danger of Jewish immigration to the occupied Palestinian territories and the flagrant violations of the rights of the Palestinian Arab people and the threat to the pan-Arab security this immigration represents. The two leaders called on the world community to put an end to this illegal immigration.

On Islamic affairs, His Excellency President Saddam Husayn expressed his appreciation for the Islamic achievements of King Fahd. These achievements are characterized by concern, diligence, and care, and they proceed from God Almighty's verses: "And hold fast, all together, by the rope which God stretches out for you,

and be not divided among yourselves," and "Verily, this brotherhood of yours is a single brotherhood, and I am your Lord and cherisher: therefore, serve Me and no other." [Koranic verses]

His excellency also expressed appreciation for the project to expand the two holy shrines in Mecca and al-Madinah and the gardens around them so they can accomodate the largest number of pilgrims. His excellency pointed out that this glorious historical act is most liked by God; it bolsters the role of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in serving the two holy shrines and safeguarding their security and stability.

President Saddam Husayn announced Iraq's support for the decision taken by the 17th Islamic foreign ministers conference in Amman 3-7 Sha'ban 1408 Hejira, corresponding to 21-25 Mar 1988, on the sanctity of the Islamic places and pilgrimage sites, and which condemns any acts of sabotage or riots in the holy places and any unlawlful practices conflicting with the teachings of the Islamic religion.

Iraq also stressed its solidarity with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its full support for its measures to secure the appropriate atmosphere for pilgrims to perfrom the rituals in security and submissiveness and to prevent any harm to the sanctity of the holy Islamic shrines or Islamic feelings; it supports Saudi measures to prevent riots in the holy places that may harm the security and safety of the pilgrimage and the sovereignty of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The Republic of Iraq, represented by his Excellency President Saddam Husayn, called on all Islamic countries to abide by the decision organizing and determining the number of pilgrims to the Islamic sites, and to cooperate with the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in everything that would achieve this.

Concerning the Arab groupings, the two leaders expressed their high appreciation for the serious efforts to achieve economic and political integration through the three Arab groups: The Gulf Cooperation Council, the Arab Cooperation Council [ACC], and the Arab Maghreb Union. These groups provide a large scope for common Arab action under the umbrella of the Arab League and according to its goals and principles.

King Fahd noted in particular the high level of cooperation and coordination among the four countries of the ACC and expressed hope the Council would achieve the goals desired by its leaders and peoples toward integrated common Arab action.

The talks touched on issues raised by foreign news media on Iraq's measures against spy Farzad Bazoft, who, Iraq stressed, confessed to spying for Israeli intellegence and received a legal trial according to the Vienna agreemnt regarding this. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has voiced its solidarity with Iraq in the measures it has taken to protect its security against espionage and aggression, and stressed that Iraq, like any other country, has the right to do everything that guarantees the protection of its people from any attempts to harm its security and stability.

King Fahd congratulated his brother President Saddam Husayn for the achievements of the reconstruction of areas in Iraq and the speed with which this operation was conducted, enabling fraternal Iraq to continue its message toward its people and Armed Forces, which bore the greatest burden in defending the eastern gate of the Arab nation. He saluted Iraq's efforts, blessed its victories, and prayed for its success as it wages the battle of development after waging the battle of survival, praise be to God.

His Excellency President Saddam Husayn expressed his sincere thanks to King Fahd for the hospitality and warm welcome he and his delegation received during their visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and his meeting with his brother King Fahd Ibn-'Abd al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques.

Yemen Arab Republic

Deputy Premier Defends Iraq's Position on Bazoft

JN1903131690 Baghdad INA in English 1205 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Sanaa, Mar 19, INA—North Yemeni Deputy Premier Dr Hasan Makki confirmed that the British intervention in Iraq's domestic affairs was unjustified. Mr. Makki told INA correspondent here that Iraq's hanging of the Iranian-born British spy journalist Bazoft, had exercised its legitimate right and implemented national decision.

He clarified that Iraq which stood fast in the face of the Iranian hostilities, is capable of defeating all plots aimed at Iraq's sovereignty and interests.

Mr. Makki said that the British hostile attitude was a provocative one aiming at Iraq's dignity and reputation.

Papers Continue To Comment on Bazoft Case

JN1703122590 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0630 GMT 17 Mar 90

[Excerpts] Baghdad, 17 Mar (INA)—Iraqi newspapers today strongly attacked the hostile falsehoods aimed at encroaching upon Iraq's right to defend its national and pan-Arab security.

AL-THAWRAH says that despite all talk, Iraq will remain a lofty bastion, invulnerable to all falsehoods, conspiracies, and aggression. In today's editorial under the headline "Anger and Condemnation," AL-THAWRAH adds: If the British Government imagines that it can tarnish Iraq's reputation and harm its international position through this media clamor, its illusions will be shattered. The British Government is the last one that can give certificates of good behavior to countries; its colonialist history, filled with chapters of conspiracy, aggression, and plunder are proof of this known fact. And Iraq's reputation and position in the world are not captive to the British Government's will and whims; Iraq's pure and shining reputation is achieved by the people's will, bravery, and big achievements in all fields and their leadership's historic role in the service of the issues of liberation, progress, and peace.

In its editorial on the mammoth popular demonstrations to be staged today in Baghdad and all governorates, AL-THAWRAH stresses that as our victorious people strongly condemn and denounce the hostile campaign against Iraq and the British acts and statements, which reveal hidden grudges against Iraq, our people take no notice at all of any of the British Government's measures, which it alone is responsible for as long as these measures aim to pressure Iraq, blackmail it, and curb its right to act in accordance with its national security requirements. This is in addition to the fact that these measures are not separated from the atmosphere of one-upmanship and party contest inside Britain.

AL-THAWRAH adds: Saddam Husayn's Iraq, which achieved a splendid victory in defeating the brutal aggression against its national independence, its people's sovereignty, and its sanctities, cannot allow any foreign side to violate its national and pan-Arab security or threaten its people's life, interests, and vital institutions. The paper affirms that Iraq will continue to exercise its legitimate right to protect its security from espionage and aggression despite the empty media uproar they [not further identified] create and the measures they adopt. Iraq will continue to mete out just retribution to any spy who is proven guilty regardless of his nationality or the foreign state that recruits him in its interests.

The Iraqi paper says: As we call on the brothers, friends, and all honest and free men in the world to condemn the British campaign and expose its evil motives and objectives, we warn against being dragged into this campaign, because this will be an encouragement to interfere in others' internal affairs; to practice espionage, conspiracies, and aggressions; and to undermine international relations.

The paper stresses that if the execution of Bazoft, the Iranian national spy who carried a British travel permit, falls within the natural and legitimate right to hand down a sentence against a person who carried out espionage acts and confessed to this in the interrogation and trial with his tongue and his own handwriting, the measures taken by the British Government against Iraq not only express its intentions against our people, but also expose its disregard of the Iraqi people's right to make any decision or measure within its sovereignty to safeguard its national and pan-Arab security. [passage omitted]

AL-JUMHURIYAH ridiculed whatever made the British Government defend a spy of Iranian nationality who carries a British travel permit and who had betrayed the message of journalism and violated the ethics of the profession, and who had exploited his status as journalist as a cover for spying on Iraqi military installations.

In its editorial today under the headline "Let Them Drink the Water of the Sea" AL-JUMHURIYAH says that the British Government is directly responsible for the malicious campaign it has fabricated against Iraq and of all the consequences and results of this campaign.

AL-JUMHURIYAH affirms that Iraq is not the country which pays attention to the barking of some rabid colonialist dogs that have found an opportunity to air their hatred toward Saddam Husayn's Iraq. The paper says: We are capable now and in the future of teaching a lesson to all those who harm us—a lesson they will not forget. We know how and when to do this to those who harm us. [passage omitted]

The paper says: We are surprised at the stand that the political leaders in in the British Government have adopted. Have they asked themselves of what value is Bazoft, and what threat he poses if he was only a journalist who visited Iraq for a press mission? Have they asked themselves why a country as renowned as Iraq should fabricate an accusation against a journalist if his activities were really innocent? [passage omitted]

The paper adds: Why do these political leaders forget that Bazoft was an Iranian national, and that there was been a war between Iraq and Iran which lasted eight years, and that no peace agreement, as yet, has been concluded between the two countries? Can these political leaders guarantee that Bazoft did not intend to pass the information he had been collecting to the authorities of his country?

The paper affirms that those who show concern for a spy are the disciples of those who have committed the most atrocious crimes in the five continents, and those who had plundered the resources of entire peoples and left them to suffer until today from the effects of poverty and backwardness. [passage omitted]

The paper adds: We cannot but promise them that we will apply the Iraqi laws to every spy whom we arrest, irrespective of his nationality. Those who do not like this can drink as much water as they want from the many oceans which exist on this planet. [passage omitted]

U.S. Senator Says Bazoft Execution Lawful

JN1703190490 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1745 GMT 17 Mar 90

[Text] Basra, 17 Mar (INA)—A visiting U.S. Senate delegation has affirmed that applying Iraqi law with respect to British and other nationals is a legitimate right. In a statement to INA in the brave al-Basrah Governorate, Mike Zarin [name as received], the head of the U.S. Senate delegation, said that the execution of the Iranian spy who carried a British travel permit is in harmony with Iraqi laws and rights.

He added that the delegation's two visits to the cities of Basra and al-Faw were interesting, especially after the reconstruction of the two cities, and that when he returns, he would urge Americans to visit them. He added: We have studied much of this deep-rooted country.

He also urged the Iranians immediately to agree to conclude a treaty to end the state of no war, no peace, saying that the reconstruction of al-Faw, which is only 200 meters from the border, is a message of peace and love. He also urged Iran to agree on a comprehensive exchange of prisoners of war between the two countries.

Papers Stress Legal Rights, Assail Britain

JN1903120090 Baghdad INA in English 1115 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Baghdad, Mar 19, INA—AL-QADISIYAH daily of Baghdad stressed that execution of the Iranian-born British spy journalist Farzad Bazoft was a legitimate and legal right exercised by Iraq in accordance with its legal and normal right empowered by the international norm and local laws.

In its article published today, the paper dealt with the trial and measures of investigation made, pursuant to the Vienna convention that secure the states' right to self-defence, sovereignty and national security against all forms of aggression and espionage.

The paper said that Iraq's firm stance reaffirms that it would never allow any party in the world to encroach its normal rights in preserving its security against espionage and aggression.

The paper made it clear that British authorities' step in recalling the ambassador and suspending the study of a number of students, were not but conclusive clue demonstrating Britain's sinister and devious practices towards a civilized country enjoying good status among the world states.

The paper further added that britain had proved that it had never abandoned its colonial mentality believing that other nations could follow its orders or regulations.

The paper stressed that Britain and its accomplice the Zionism [as received] well realize that Iraq under the leadership of President Saddam Husayn could never yield to pressure specially the issues as concerns its security, sovereignty and dignity, confirming that its reputation and status in the world would have never been decided by Britain.

AL-THAWRAH daily of Baghdad said that the British Government's devious stance towards Iraq, has proved, that it did not recognize the international laws and charters.

Commenting on the British propaganda campaign against Iraq, the paper added that realities confirmed that London by its bizarre stance would endanger its interests without gaining anything, because Iraq would never submit to any form of threat and extortion.

The paper pointed out to the deliberate British campaign against Iraq which confirmed that Thatcher government has been sticking to its worn out old colonial tendency and seeking for restoring its past prestige and influence.

The execution of the Iranian born British journalist Farzad Bazoft was not but a pretext exploited by London to carry out sinister schemes, associated with Britain's role in the region and its attempts to return to the Arab Gulf, which became the most vital region in the world.

The paper stressed that the recent British behaviour on recalling the ambassador and suspending the ministerial visits and study of a number of Iraqi students, means that Britain deals with other nations with an arrogant conduct incompatible with all international norms and laws, the matter that make Britain quite lose its credibility in the region.

The paper concluded that Britain had committed big error and therefore it should pay dearly.

The English language daily "THE BAGHDAD OBSERVER" said Iraq's execution of this spy was only a normal action taken against an agent seeking to hurt its people and undermine its security. It is well-known fact that Israel has repeatedly threatened to bomb Iraqi military installations over the past two years. And the information that could be gathered by Israelis about Iraq's military installations would benefit the aggressors in any new attempt against this country.

Why should a British journalist disguise himself as an Indian doctor and use a hospital vehicle to probe an incident in a military complex, there must have been more to that and indeed the so-called journalist explained his target?

The death penalty against espionage offences is applied not only in Iraq but also in many other countris as a legal action to safeguard the nations' security and peace.

Other countries have applied such penalties against spies, whether nationals or foreigners but, the British smear campaign against Iraq is unprecedented and unjustifiable.

Iraq is only one of many countries of the world where capital punishment for serious crimes is still [in] effect. Is there a more serious crime than espionage which can harm a whole nation in the interest of enemies, especially in this volatile region, where Israel seeks every chance to destroy Iraq and the Arabs?

Capital punishment has not been abolished in many other "civilised" nations as the British Government is well aware of.

The execution of Bazoft is related to the national security of Iraq and is a totally internal matter which the British Government has no right to question. Any attempt to do so is a blatant interference in the internal affairs of an independent state.

Arab Liberation Front Defends Bazoft Execution

JN1903130290 Baghdad INA in English 1240 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Baghdad, Mar 19, INA—The Arab Liberation Front confirmed that the hostile campaign against Iraq and its legitimate right to defend its security and sovereignty was not a reaction to Iraq's stance, but it was a preplanned imperialist attack led by Britain in connivance with the Zionist entity.

In a statement issued yesterday, the Arab Front said that Iraq's decision to execute the Iranian-nationality spy carrying a British passport, Farzad Bazoft, sprung from its keenness to defend its land, sovereignty and dignity.

It added that this decision did not violate human rights as imperialist and Zionist circles claimed, but it was Iraq's right to apply its laws necessitating the punishment of spies, in conformity with international laws and conventions.

Cables to Saddam Condemn UK's 'Disgraceful' Stand

JN1903153790 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1300 GMT 18 Mar 90

[Excerpts] His excellency the president leader, Saddam Husayn, has received cables from Iraqi and Arab unions denouncing and condemning Britain's disgraceful anti-Iraq stand and brazen interference in its domestic affairs.

The Executive Council of the Kurdistan Autonomous Region condemned the clamor raised by colonialist Britain and Zionist circles and the backers of the forces of evil and darkness. In his cable, the chairman of the Executive Council, 'Abd-al-Karim al-Barazanji, highlighted the rallying of the masses of the Kurdistan Autonomous Region behind the historic leadership of President Saddam. The Executive Council of the Kurdistan Autonomous Region's cable said: The execution of the Iranian-born spy carrying a British travel document is an eloquent lesson taught by the striving Iraq to all the ignominious, rancorous colonial and Zionist enemies who imagine that they can transgress against great Iraq and tarnish its bright image.

Leaders of Arab cooperative societies expressed their absolute solidarity with the Iraqi people as they stand up to the iniquitous British-Zionist campaign targeting Iraq's national security. A telegram sent to the president on their behalf by Hisham Hasan Tawfiq, secretary general of the Arab Cooperative Union, said that this drive is directed not only against Iraq but against the Arab nation and its liberation movement as well. The slurs and threats, the cable added, will not stand between Iraq and the implementation of the due process of its national laws against whoever dares act in the interest of the enemies of Iraq and the Arab nation. [passage omitted]

Meanwhile, in Amman, Dr. Samir Qatami, deputy chairman of Jordan's Writers Association, denounced the British stand and the crusade mounted by the Western media against Iraq, which exercised its right by executing a spy who jeopardized its security and engaged in espionage on its vital installations. He said this hireling confessed to espionage for Zionist and British intelligence services. Iraq is entitled to apply due process on a spy who had a fair trial attended by British Embassy staff in Baghdad. [passage omitted]

Dr. Akram Nash'at Ibrahim, secretary general of the council of Arab interior ministers said the execution of the spy was an act worthy of any nation jealous of its national security against crimes of aggression and espionage. By fabricating this uproar, the British Government is seeking to cover the wave of protest against its imposition of new taxes on the British people. He further urged determined, prompt, and united Arab action against Britain's antagonistic behavior toward Iraq.

In Amman, Jalal 'Abbasi, president of Jordan's Jurists Association, said Iraq exercised sovereignty over its soil by apprehending two spies and giving them the benefit of a fair trial. A spy was executed having been found guilty of espionage. After eight years of hostilites defending its security and sovereignty in the face of Iranian aggression, Iraq was only safeguarding its sovereignty, part of which is to see to the implementation of its laws on its own soil, 'Abbasi added. He explained that when Britain gave travel documents to the Iranian-born journalist, it knew that he planned to engage in destructive activity, drawing charts and taking pictures of economic and military installations to give them to the racist, historical enemy that is scheming to swallow the Arab homeland. [passage omitted]

Oil Minister Returns From Vienna OPEC Meeting

JN1903191390 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1835 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Baghdad, 19 Mar (INA)—Oil Minister 'Isam 'Abd-al-Rahim al-Jalabi this evening returned to

Baghdad after taking part in the fifth meeting of OPEC's eight-member ministerial committee. The meeting concluded in Vienna yesterday.

In a statement to INA, the oil minister said that participants at the three-day meeting discussed a number of issues, including developments in the international oil market, prices, and the member states' observance of production quotas determined by the OPEC ministerial council during its ordinary meeting in November 1989.

The Iraqi minister explained that the meetings and contacts held by heads of the member states' delegations on the sidelines were useful and positive, and paved the way for the possibility of reaching a new and comprehensive agreement on the production ceiling, prices, and the member states' quotas, topics that the OPEC ministerial council will take up during its ordinary session in May 1990.

'Text' of Saddam Message to Gorbachev on Election

JN1903154590 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Leader President Saddam Husayn has sent a cable of congratulations to USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev on his election to the post of president of the Soviet Union. Following is the text of the cable:

Your Excellency Mikhail Gorbachev, president of the USSR: On the occasion of your election as president to the Soviet Union, we are pleased to send to Your Excellency, on our own behalf and on behalf of our comrades in the leadership, our warmest congratulations, wishing you success in your tasks. On this occasion, we are pleased to affirm our desire and determination to strengthen and deepen the existing ties of friendship and cooperation between Iraq and the Soviet Union to serve our peoples' interests and achieve security, peace, and stability in our region and the world. Wishing you health and happiness, and further progress to the friendly peoples of the Soviet Union.
[Signed] Saddam Husayn, President of the Republic of Iraq

Saddam Chairs Meeting on New Draft Constitution

JN1903125690 Baghdad INA in English 1155 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Bahgdad, Mar 19, INA—President Saddam Husayn today presided over a joint meeting of the Revolution Command Council RCC and the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party regional leadership.

During the four-hour meeting, members of the Council and the Party started discussion of the new draft constitution prepared by the specialized committee chaired by the RCC vice-chairman, and reviewed 26 articles of the draft constitution.

PRC Trade Union Official Hails Peace Initiative

JN1803150690 Baghdad INA in English 1220 GMT 18 Mar 90

[Text] Baghdad, Mar 18, INA—Vice Chairman of All China Trade Unions Federation Chen Bingquan praised President Saddam Husayn's peace initiative announced on 69th anniversary of founding the Iraqi Army last January.

During his meeting with Chairman of the General Federation of Iraqi Trade Unions Fadil Mahmud Gharib, the Chinese official confirmed that the Iraqi initiative was a bold step that would give an impetus to the peace process in the region and maintain just and comprehensive peace between Iraq and Iran.

The two sides discussed aspects of consolidating the relations between the two federations.

Maneuverings Continue in Wake of Government Fall

Agudat Yisra'el Backs Peres

TA1903183090 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1800 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Excerpt] The ultraorthodox Agudat Yisra'el Party this afternoon advised President Hayim Herzog to ask Shim'on Peres to form the new government. This was on the instructions of the Aguda's ruling body, the Council of Torah Sages, which discussed the issue for five hours today at a meeting in Bene Beraq.

After the Agudat Yisra'el Knesset members met the president, reporter Jack Katzenell asked two of them, Rabbi Moshe Ze'ev Feldman and Rabbi Menahem Porush, why the Aguda had decided to support Peres and not Prime Minister Shamir. Rabbi Feldman answered first:

[Begin recording] [Feldman] The time before, we recommended Shamir, and we were very disappointed. He did not keep [words indistinct] his commitments.

[Katzenell] Do you agree with Mr. Peres' foreign policy? For example that Israel should give a positive answer to Secretary of State Baker?

[Feldman] Naturally, yes, of course. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Herzog Position Detailed

TA1903202790 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1830 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] President Herzog intends to make a resolution as soon as possible. The president believes elections should not be held, and that a national unity government will not be created. Good evening to our correspondent, Mikha'el Birenhack:

[Birenhack] Good evening. To begin with, we will point out that the following is a picture of the situation as it emerged at the end of the second day of consultations. It is based on the impressions of representatives who met with the president and heard him make these observations throughout the day.

The two large parties advised the president they favor a unity government, but each refused to operate under the leader of the adversary's party. This situation led President Herzog to the conclusion a unity government is not possible. As noted, this is the picture emerging from participants' remarks in today's consultations.

The president further believes a resolution should be made as soon as possible. A government cannot function for any length of time without a defense minister, particularly in these times of mass immigration, unemployment problems, and at a juncture when a decision on the state budget is required. The nation is tired of the politicians' conduct. This is the message the president relayed today to people with whom he conferred.

It will be noted that in a draw—which is how things now look—the law allows the president leeway to decide and does not instruct him to impose the task of forming the new government on any particular individual. As things now look, the president will consult his conscience and announce his decision as soon as possible, perhaps tomorrow.

NRP Recommends Shamir

TA1903203390 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2000 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] The National Religious Party representatives have recommended to President Herzog that Yitzhaq Shamir form the government. After the meeting, Minister Zvulun Hammer said that in his opinion the president will not conduct another round of consultations with parties and that he will decide in a few days on the candidate to form the government.

Our correspondent Nava Kohen reports that tomorrow the president will receive delegations of Moledet, Degel Hatora, Shinuy, breakaway Liberals, the Democratic Arab Party, and Tehiya, thus concluding the consultations.

It still is unclear whether a second meeting between the president and SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim] will be conducted.

SHAS for Shamir; Parties Tied

TA2003071090 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0500 GMT 20 Mar 90

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Last night it was reported SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim] has made a final decision not only to support the Likud faction, but also to personally recommend Yitzhaq Shamir. Our correspondent Shlomo Raz reports the SHAS decision was made based on a letter Prime Minister Shamir is supposed to send Rabbi 'Ovadya Yosef. The letter addresses the issue of promoting the peace process, according to the rabbi's statements. The letter apparently will include a promise to continue the peace initiative.

Therefore, the situation now appears to be a draw. Sixty Knesset members [MK's] recommend entrusting Yitzhaq Shamir with forming the government, while 60 MK's support Shim'on Peres.

Moledet Backs Shamir

TA2003092790 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0900 GMT 20 Mar 90

[Text] The Moledet faction has recommended President Herzog entrust Yitzhaq Shamir with forming the government. Knesset Member [MK] Rehav'am Ze'evi said the faction made this decision as the best choice out of the two bad alternatives it had. Moledet prefers early elections be conducted.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 0830 GMT on 20 March reports "MK Ze'evi came to the Prime Minister's Office this morning, read Yitzhaq Shamir's letter to Rabbi 'Ovadya Yosef twice, and was satisfied this letter does not include any promise of a positive response to Baker. He therefore told President Herzog this morning he supports the lesser of two evils: Yitzhaq Shamir."]

Our correspondents Yaron Enosh and Nava Kohen report the representatives of the Degel Hatora faction left the president's chambers several minutes ago, after having also recommended Yitzhaq Shamir. This recommendation was given, however, out of the hope this would lead to the establishment of a national unity government. The president now is convening with the Shinuy representatives. President Herzog will conclude his consultations with the representatives of all the Knesset factions today.

'Breakaways', Shinuy Support

TA2003102990 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1000 GMT 20 Mar 90

[Excerpt] The Party for the Advancement of Zionist Ideology in Israel, made up of the Liberal breakaways, a few minutes ago left the president's residence. Four of the breakaways attended the meeting, but Minister Moda'i was absent. They told the president they wish to be regarded as part of the Likud faction, even though they appeared before the president as an independent faction. They were preceded by the representatives of Shinuy, who announced their support for a government headed by Shim'on Peres. [passage omitted]

HA'ARETZ Commentary

TA1903150690 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 19 Mar 90 p B1

[Commentary by Dan Margalit: "A Narrow Government in Content, Too"]

[Text] The task of forming the government probably will be entrusted to Shim'on Peres. President Hayim Herzog presumably will not be taken in by the verbal slickness of Peres' political rivals, who are trying to nominate another candidate. He also is aware of the fact Yitzhaq Shamir was defeated because the entire Likud and its breakaway members refused to pursue the peace initiative as ultimately defined by Rabbi 'Ovadya Yosef. The expected meeting with the Palestinians in Cairo deserves to be given a chance.

This is the only meaning of the parliamentary drama that ended in a vote of no confidence and whose leading protagonist was Peres.

The business-as-usual pose adopted by Shamir's supporters and the moves to place a new leader at the head of the Likud will not help. They may replace the head, but the stomach will continue to churn.

David Levi, of the constraints, will persist in his "no" to the peace initiative and ignore the results of the Knesset vote, while Moshe Arens' "yes" will have very few supporters. Those who shut off the microphone on the prime minister in the Likud Central Committee convention a month ago will not stand idly by in the face of the foreign minister's sweet talk.

After all, a narrow-based government led by the Likud would not have a chance, either. Such a coalition could be formed on the condition Levi or Arens promised to comply with the demand of Tehiya, Tzomet, and Moledet and say "no" to both James Baker and 'Ovadya Yosef. In 42 days, the appointment of a Likud representative to form a government would have been a signal from the presidential residence that everything had failed and elections should be brought forward.

Until that happens, the only game in Jerusalem is Peres'. The fact the secular, ultraorthodox, PLO supporters, Likud ministers, and Yitzhaq Rabin—who says one thing with his mouth and votes another with his hand—will try to undermine his labors makes no difference.

Peres soon will realize the task of forming a government is more complex than that of bringing down the previous one, and that it is hard to steer a political solution with a coalition-to-be. "The government is not the solution to our problems. It is our problem," Ronald Reagan is quoted as having said in James Schlesinger's book. Peres may find this witticism applies to his problem somewhat, since 60 opponents to Shamir somehow may be scrapped together, but it will be hard to join ultraorthodox, doves, hawks, and Arabs together into a working coalition.

The government is the problem. Attempts for comprehensive political progress and the solution of poor-rich and religious-secular relations would become burdensome and soon lead to failure. The government may fulfill its agenda only if it is a modest and humble national one, an agenda that is limited in ambition and time, as befits a political fabric made up of odds and ends.

Although Shim'on Peres and Rafi Edri effectively attained the first stage of their objective, maneuvering under inferior conditions, this time around they will have to be extremely careful, lest they find themselves in the same predicament as Shamir, who when confronted with failure, resorted to patriotism to justify his lies.

In the contacts he is conducting with his partners-to-be, Peres can offer little in terms of credibility, lest he tries to grab too much and ultimately loses it all:

—The future Israeli Government already is committed to its predecessor's peace initiative. Although it could strive for better solutions in the next few years, in the foreseeable future Jerusalem must be careful to maintain continuity in the international arena. The partners-to-be may rally around the notion of going to Cairo and promoting elections in the territories. The

new coalition partners for the time being will store away their pro- and anti-PLO diatribes.

—A government led by Peres could receive from the United States an additional bonus of $1 billion to help absorb immigration. Although it tends to cut foreign aid, America—unlike its Jews—does not want Soviet refugees to come knocking on its gates. The removal of the obstacle to peace in the Cairo meeting may abate the intifadah, do away with the European sanctions, and create a climate of goodwill toward Israel which, among other things, would be reflected in extraordinary U.S. aid for the absorption of immigrants. In financial terms, the emphasis on having these immigrants settled within the boundaries of the Green Line would equal lots of money.

—A few months out of power would reduce the ranks of the Likud, which will have a hard time electing a leader acceptable to all. What we saw in the Likud Central Committee meeting was only the beginning. Hundreds would be expelled from various directorial boards and forced to relinquish their positions of privilege and influence. The funds that finance minister-designate Arye Der'i would funnel to SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim] institutions would further erode from the traditional support for the Likud, since the latter's supporters would become the receivers of SHAS's favors.

Only in 12 to 18 months, when these three stages are over, the government would, perhaps, reach the conclusion it had come to the end of the road and would carefully, without provoking any crisis, coordinate a convenient date for holding early elections on the question of peace. By then the word peace would have ceased to be synonymous with monster.

If Peres tries to set up a government with such minor guidelines, he may live to present it to the Knesset. But if already at this point he wants to reach out for a bigger vision of far-reaching peace, he might find himself without a mandate to present the new coalition from the Knesset podium.

Shamir Links 'Diplomatic Position' to Economy

TA1903100790 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 19 Mar 90 p 8

[By Judy Siegel]

[Text] Prime Minister Shamir said last night that "if our economy were stronger, our diplomatic position would be stronger and we might not have reached the current disagreement."

In his first public appearance since the government fell last week, Shamir was apparently hinting that less economic dependence on the U.S. would have made Israel less susceptible to pressure regarding the Baker initiative and its destructive effect on the coalition.

Addressing the 20th anniversary dinner of the Jerusalem College of Technology, the premier also referred to American declarations that Jerusalem's new neighbourhoods are "illegal."

The government, he stressed, "will stand guard to ensure sovereignty over all of Jerusalem. We must take care so as not to give the impression that Jerusalem could ever be divided." The state's major aims—security and aliya—"have not changed," Shamir declared.

Electoral Reform Bill Passes Preliminary Reading

TA1903204390 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2000 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Tonight the Knesset passed the preliminary reading of the bill for a direct and personal election of the prime minister. The bill was introduced by Knesset members Yo'ash Tzidon from Tzomet, Amnon Rubinstein from Shinuy, David Liba'i from the Alignment, and Uri'el Linn from the Likud.

Our correspondent Ze'ev Kohen reports the bill was transferred to the Knesset Constitution, Law, and Justice Committee, which will prepare it for the first reading.

Ministry Welcomes Syrian Talks, Prefers Treaty

TA1903184790 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1800 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Excerpt] The Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem has welcomed the idea of talks with Syria, but says the goal should be an overall peace treaty, rather than the proposed demilitarization of the Golan Heights. A ministry spokesman said Israel is ready to conduct direct negotiations without preconditions with any Arab country, including Syria, for the conclusion of a peace treaty.

Jewish residents of the Golan Heights are worried by the implications of Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad's reported willingness for a settlement with Israel, including the demilitarization of the Golan. [passage omitted]

Palestinians Meet Carter, Call For Own State

TA1903123590 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Excerpt] Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter met this morning with a delegation of prominent Palestinians and was told that Jerusalem should be capital of an independent Palestinian state. Earlier, the former President had made a sharp attack on Israeli human rights policy in the territories. More details from Mark Weiss:

The message from the 13 Palestinians who met with former President Carter in East Jerusalem was the same that is presented to all foreign politicians and dignitaries: the right of the Palestinians to an independent state with Jerusalem as its capital, and the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

The Palestinian delegation that included Faysal al-Husayni, Sari Nusaybah, and Hanna Sinyurah also told Carter that in their opinion, an international conference should be the next step forward in the peace process. [passage omitted]

Al-Husayni Comments on Meeting

JN1903133190 Jerusalem in Arabic to the Arab World 1030 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Report by 'Isam Abu-Dawlah, West Bank affairs correspondent, carried in the "With the Events" program; passages within quotation marks recorded]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] After concluding his visit to the Israeli (Bet Salem) center for human rights in the territories, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter went to the National Hotel in East Jerusalem, where he met with a number of Palestinian figures who briefed him on the situation. The figures include Faysal al-Husayni, Sari Nusaybah, Mrs. Zuhayrah Kamal, Zakariya al-Agha, Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, and others. On this meeting, Faysal al- Husayni says: "The Palestinian position which sets that our major objective is to establish a Palestinian state." [sentence as heard]

Asked whether the possibility of convening the U.S.-Israeli-Palestinian meeting in Cairo has been discussed, Faysal al-Husayni says: "In fact, the convocation of such a meeting depends on the Israeli position and the formation of a new Israeli government. Therefore, we are ready. The PLO has adopted a very clear position. We are only waiting for the Israeli position. We hope there will be one, and that there will be no return to governments that cannot take decisions as the case has been."

Asked whether any proposals have been submitted or any issues raised before former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, Faysal al-Husayni answered: "Many opinions have been voiced regarding this urging Carter to continue his human rights campaign for the sake of greater understanding of the reality of the situation and advancing the peace process based on the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and a Palestinian state alongside Israel."

IDF To Send New Recruits to Territories

TA2003090190 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 20 Mar 90 p 2

[By Joshua Brilliant]

[Text] Tel Aviv—The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] will occasionally send new recruits to beef up troops policing the territories, an authoritive military source said, in what seems to be a retraction of previous reports.

Last month, O/C [Officer Commanding] Southern Command Matan Vilna'i told high school pupils in Ramat Hasharon that the IDF would try not to send new recruits to the territories. The army would do its best to let them complete their three-to-four month basic training uninterupted by such duties, he said.

But the source confirmed Sunday that the IDF planned to send new recruits to the territories at the end of this month.

Asked to explain the decision, the source said new recruits will be sent when troops need to be reinforced, for example on holidays and Palestinian commemoration days, or "on every other occasion not planned for in advance." Their service, he added, will last "only for a few days, such as a weekend."

Jabalyah Resident Dies; 3 Soldiers Wounded

TA1903184890 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1800 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] In the southern Golan, a mine exploded this afternoon, wounding two soldiers. They sustained light to moderate injuries and were taken to a hospital in Tiberias. The Army, which suspects that the mine was an old Syrian one, is investigating the incident.

In Gaza, an Israeli soldier was lightly wounded in a stone-throwing incident today. He was taken to hospital in Ashqelon and later released.

A Voice of Israel reporter says there were disturbances throughout the Gaza Strip, as well as a general strike called by the Islamic Jihad Organization.

At the Tel Hashomer Hospital, an 18-year-old resident of the Jabalyah refugee camp died this morning, after being wounded during disturbances at a school in Gaza yesterday. The Army is investigating the circumstances surrounding his death.

Gazan Killed; General Strike in Territories

TA2003060590 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0500 GMT 20 Mar 90

[Text] The Army has imposed curfew on several areas in the Gaza Strip. Last night a Gaza youth was killed during a violent clash with soldiers. A top officer has been appointed to investigate the death.

A general strike throughout the territories has been called by the United National Leadership. Very few workers came to Israel from the Gaza Strip this morning.

Former U.S. President Carter Arrives 16 Mar

JN1603130490 Amman Domestic Service in English 1200 GMT 16 Mar 90

[Text] Former American President Mr. Jimmy Carter and Mrs. Carter arrived at al-'Aqabah airport today at the start of a visit to Jordan. Mr. Carter flew in from Damascus.

Earlier today, Mr. Carter said the chances seemed better that ever for the release of foreign hostages in Lebanon, and the Syrian president, Hafiz al-Asad, has pledged to help win their freedom. Mr. Carter made the remarks at a news conference in the Syrian capital.

He said he did not know if there were any secret U.S. dealings on the matter, but noted there that were encouraging statements from Tehran.

Regarding Jewish immigration to Israel, Carter said he supported the right of Soviet Jews to emigrate to Israel, but said he agreed with U.S. President George Bush that they should not be allowed to settle in the occupied West Bank, Gaza Strip, Golan Heights, or East Jerusalem.

Moreover, Mr. Carter said he hoped that an international peace conference on the Middle East would be held.

Comments on Middle East Issues

JN1603194090 Amman Television Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 16 Mar 90

[Text] Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and his wife arrived in Amman this evening from al-'Aqabah, beginning Mr. Carter's two-day visit to the Kingdom. Mr. Carter was received by Mr. 'Adnan 'Abu-'Awdah, his majesty the king's political adviser, and the U.S. ambassador in Amman.

Mr. Carter talked to our reporter on his tour:

[Begin recording, in English] [Carter] Well, the major purpose about the trip is to follow up on a previous visit to this region to do what we can, both to understand and maybe to expedite the peace process. This particular year, as far as the Middle East is concerned, the Carter Center [as heard] will be concentrating on the economic and the peace interrelationship, how the peace process can help improve the quality of life of people here, and how hopes for a better economic future can contribute to people wanting to have peace. So, we're not only looking at the so-called Baker-Mubarak-Shamir plan to start the first talks between Israelis and the Palestinians, if and when the Israeli Government's question is settled. But I had extensive discussions in Syria about the implementation of the al-Ta'if proposals that were worked out in Saudi Arabia and how Lebanon can finally be brought to a strong, central coherent government. The individual militias can be disbanded and become part of a supportive effort and the role that the United States and the Syria, and the United States and Egypt, and obviously the United States and Jordan can play in the future of this region. We'll leave here and go to Israel for two or three days. We might understand the political situation there. And following this decision that the Israeli people will have to make about their own government, we hope to get the peace process going again. Ultimately, we're working toward what I think is best—that is, an international peace conference.

[Reporter] So Your Excellency, you believe that there should be an international conference to solve these problems?

[Carter] Yes, I do. I think the first phase might very well be through the introductory talks between Palestinians in the occupied territories on the one hand, and the Israelis on the other. And if these talks can be orchestrated, then they can be successful. This can greatly alleviate the fears and the concerns and the misunderstandings and the animosity that exist between Israelis and Palestinians—and let them know that we can work together. And I think then it might open up the door to the next step, which I think would be the final step, hopefully, that is, an international peace conference where a comprehensive peace can be maintained to give the Palestinians self-determination, and to remove the barriers that have long existed between Israelis and their neighbors, and to lower the need for a military option in resolving the differences here. [end recording]

Meets With Parliament Members

JN1703160490 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 17 Mar 90

[Passages within quotation marks are recorded]

[Text] At the Parliament today, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter met with the president of the Senate and the speaker of the House of Representatives, with members of both Houses present. On the discussions that took place during this meeting, here is a dispatch from our reporter, Khalil al-Qaryuti:

[Al-Qaryuti] Several issues were reviewed during the meeting. The most important of these were peace in the Middle East, Soviet Jewish emigration, the international peace conference, and the U.S. position on these issues. Senate President Ahmad al-Lawzi spoke at the outset of the meeting, explaining the Jordanian position on the Palestinian people's rights, stressing the need for withdrawal from the occupied territories, and explaining Jordan's position on Soviet Jewish emigration and the international peace conference.

House of Representatives Speaker Sulayman 'Arar then spoke, expressing the need for a firm U.S. policy on Middle East issues. In this respect, he pointed out that U.S. policy is biased in favor of Israel. 'Arar emphasized that former U.S. President Carter should influence U.S. policy on these issues and that the U.S. policies should be more positive.

Carter then spoke, reiterating his previous position as president. He said he was against Israel's continued occupation of the occupied territories and that the Palestinians should have their right to self-determination. He stressed the Jewish emigration from the USSR is legal, but it should not take place at the expense of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination.

An expanded discussion then took place between members of the Senate and the House of Representatives and former President Carter.

Following the meeting, Senate Member Hamad al-Farhan, rapporteur of the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee, spoke to our radio. He said:

"First, the Senate president explained the Jordanian viewpoint in detail. He was clear, and advocated the Palestinian people's rights clearly. He also stressed the need for withdrawal from the occupied territories, and the right to self-determination. This is the known Jordanian position.

"The House of Representatives speaker then spoke, emphasizing the same points. The House of Representatives speaker said clearly that U.S. policy is biased and that a man like Carter should try to change the U.S. Administration's position.

"This was followed by Carter's answers. Carter reiterated his previous stand as a former president. From his viewpoint, he said that Camp David was an appropriate solution. It was as if he were trying to say Camp David gave the Palestinians and the Arabs more rights and possibilities than are available now. At any rate, I do not agree with him on this; however, he was defending his viewpoint as one of the makers of Camp David. Carter clearly has emphasized he is against Israel's continued occupation of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem, that the Palestinians should have their right to self-determination, and that the Soviet Jewish emigration, from his viewpoint, is legal, with the condition it should not take place at the expense of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination."

Dr. Husni al-Shayyab, rapporteur of the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee, gave his assessment of this meeting to our radio. He said:

"I should say that Mr. Carter was eager to stress his visit is a private one. As we know, he is no longer the president of the United States. However, he actually is making great efforts to become better acquainted with the region's problems. In light of this, he said he would report the results of his visit to the U.S. Administration and the American people through the U.S. news media. From this angle, I believe he indirectly is influencing things."

Further on Meeting

JN1703175090 Amman Domestic Service in English 1700 GMT 17 Mar 90

[Text] Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter criticized Israel today for planning to settle Soviet Jews in the occupied Arab territories. He told Jordanian parliamentarians in Amman today to the extent [as heard] that the Israeli officials are using the Soviet Jewish immigration to populate the occupied territories: This is counterproductive and impediment to peace and an unwarranted and inexcusable exploitation of the Soviet Jews. Mr. Carter said Soviet Jews have the right to go to Israel, but added the Israelis do not have the right to settle them in East Jerusalem, the West Bank, or Gaza.

Mr. Carter said Israel's right-wing Likud leaders, unlike those of the Labor Party, have never been ready to sit down and talk on an equal basis with Palestinians. He said an international peace conference remained the best forum for an overall Middle East settlement, but step by step preliminaries could boost mutual trust.

Carter described proposed Israeli-Palestinian talks in Cairo to prepare for Palestinian elections in the West Bank and Gaza as a step in the right direction.

Earlier, the speakers of the Upper House and Lower House of Parliament, Mr. Ahmad al-Lawzi and Mr. Sulayman 'Arar, met the former U.S. president.

The two speakers pressed the need for the United States to take an active role in achieving a just peace in the area. They also stressed that the current Israeli Government crisis is a cover up to Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union to the occupied Arab territories in order to expel the rightful owners of these lands.

They stressed that the long, friendly relations with the United States have been strained due to the export of all kinds of weapons to Israel to carry out its aggressive policies against the Arab people. The two speakers also praised Mr. Carter for his endless efforts to achieve peace in the world in general, and the Middle East in particular.

Meets With Foreign Minister

JN1703181090 Amman Domestic Service in English 1700 GMT 17 Mar 90

[Text] The foreign minister, Mr. Marwan al-Qasim, received former U.S. President Jimmy Carter at his office this morning. Mr. Carter apprised the foreign minister of the nature of his visit, which started yesterday. He explained his view vis-a-vis the situation in the Middle East and his efforts to arrange a Palestinian-Israeli dialogue as a prelude to the international Middle East peace conference.

Mr. al-Qasim explained to Mr. Carter Jordan's position towards the Palestinian question and obstacles in the path of peace resulting from Israel's harsh and intransigent stands.

The foreign minister said Israel's policies, which reject just peace, threaten security and stability in this sensitive part of the world. He said the latest example of Israel's attempts to abort peace changes is its policy on the Soviet Jewish immigrants. Mr. al-Qasim said the Israeli premier, Yitzhaq Shamir, made it clear that the Jewish infux was necessary to create, what he calls, a greater Israel.

Meets Crown Prince Hasan

JN1703215290 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 2100 GMT 17 Mar 90

[Text] His Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the regent, received at the Royal Court today former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, who is on a visit to Jordan as part of a tour of the region that so far has taken him to Egypt and Syia. The peace process in the region was reviewed.

The former U.S. president briefed the regent on his talks with officials in Egypt and Syria.

Comments on Syria, Peace

JN1803145890 Amman Domestic Service in English 1200 GMT 18 Mar 90

[Text] Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter has said that during his visit to Jordan, he held fruitful and helpful conversations with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the regent; Jordanian officials; and members of the two houses of Parliament.

Speaking to reporters at the end of his visit to Jordan today, President Carter said the United States recognizes the right of the Palestinians to determine their own future through negotiations with the Israelis and other parties on the final status of the occupied territories.

He said he has discussed this with many [word indistinct] leaders and he has the impression that there is a posibility of confederation between the Palestinian entity and Jordan. The permanent status of the West Bank and Gaza, he added, should be determined by the Palestinians through help of the international community, and the United States supports this trend.

President Carter said that the funds which the United States give to Israel specifically preclude the use of these funds for building settlements in the West Bank and Gaza, and that this has been U.S. policy since 1967.

He recalled that President Bush made a statement about a week ago voicing his opposition to the construction of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories. Mr. Carter said that the position of his country on this question has not changed.

The former U.S. president said that ultimate hope is movement towards an international peace conference, where a comprehensive peace could be concluded.

Jordan, President Carter went on to say, has always played a constructive role in the peace process, and that his majesty the king has obviously expressed his support for the next step which should be taken.

President Carter asserted that there are serious human rights violations against the Palestinians by the military occupation authorities.

Asked about the current cabinet crisis in Israel, Mr. Carter said he hopes the Israelis will make a decision that will be conducive to peace. He noted that the peace process will be better if there were a clear definition which party is in charge, the Likud or Labor.

President Carter said that, both in his last visit to Syria in 1979 and this one, Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad authorized him to state publicly that Syria supports the peace process and the convening of an international peace conference, as well as direct negotiations with Israel on all the outstanding issue, including the Golan heights. He noted that this Syrian position is very constructive and that the issue of the Golan heights can be negotiated under the framework of an international peace conference.

Mr. Carter said Washington supports all United Nations resolutions on the Middle East as a basis of its foreign policy and would support any agreement between Israel and its neighbors. The United States, he said, is using its influence to a maximum degree to encourage movement towards peace. The international peace conference, he went on to say, is the best forum to have comprehensive peace, and the United States will not try to impose anything on any party.

Asked about Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union, the former U.S. president said the United States has announced it will accept 80,000 Jewish emigrants annually, and this is the higher number of Soviets ever accepted in the United States. He recalled that when he was president, the highest number ever accepted was 40,000-45,000 emigrants annually. He added that it would be his preference that the Israeli Government would announce that Soviet Jews who come to Israel would not be settled in the occupied Arab territories. He noted that the United States supports the right of return for Palestinians or compensation for the property as stipulated in the United Nations Security Council Resolution 194.

U.S. 'Positive' Stand, Anti-Bush Campaign Seen

JN1803112590 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 18 Mar 90 pp 1, 18

[Editorial: "A Zionist Campaign Against Bush"]

[Text] Following the collapse of the government coalition in Israel and the noisy fall of Shamir and his nihilistic policy, Zionist-American quarters, supported by their elements inside Congress, have begun a concentrated campaign against President George Bush's declared stance on the issue of settling Soviet emigrants in occupied Jerusalem, in an attempt to dissuade the

U.S. president from this positive stance, and force him to renege on his stance under pressure and blackmail—similar to what happened to his predecessors of U.S. presidents.

Some of these quarters, which are known for their blind, traditional bias toward Israel, moreover, began to hold President Bush and his Secretary of State James Baker responsible for the downfall of the Israeli Government and the stalemate in the Middle East peace process. By doing so, these quarters wanted to move to the offensive position after lingering throughout many months in the defensive position, along with Yitzhaq Shamir, which caused them a political defeat of the same magnitude as that suffered by the Likud leader—who went too far in ignoring international will.

President Bush's stance on the issue of Jerusalem and considering this Arab city part of the territories occupied in 1967, to tell the truth, is a positive stance welcomed and highly appreciated by the Arab world. In fact, many considered this stance evidence that a certain change has taken place in the traditional U.S. stance, especially that Bush did not rush to rectify his stance or apologize for his statement, the way the American officials are used to doing. This consolidated the conviction the U.S. Administration's new policy is not a replica of the previous U.S. administration's policy.

Perhaps President Bush's stance on the issue of occupied Jerusalem—and the undeniable positive aspect it denotes—will be a prelude to a new U.S. reconsideration of historical policies which are unjust to the Arabs and the Palestinians. This might also be an indication there are American leaders who are unwilling to turn a blind eye to the Israeli practices and violations forever. This drives us unhesitatingly to commend Bush's stance that might, in effect, reactivate the peace process in the region. This will happen if the Bush administration keeps away from bias and indecision, does not yield to Zionist pressures, enjoys the highest degree of wisdom, courage, and farsightedness, and furthermore, honors the spirit of justice, fairness, freedom, and peace.

U.S. Hand Seen in Al-Rabitah Factory Fire

JN1603113490 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 16 Mar 90 p 18

["With Life and People" column by Dhiyab Mahkadimah: "International Terrorism Is Chasing Arab Industries"]

[Text] Before opening a dialogue with the PLO, the U.S. Administration continued to stick to the proviso that the PLO officially and unequivocally renounce terrorism.

The PLO continually declared it was opposed to any terrorist action, regardless of the perpetrator. This is despite the fact the PLO, in accordance with international law and norms, is a national liberation movement which defends its people's right to repatriation and liberation, although armed struggle is a legitimate means approved by international norms to achieve national objectives. Nevertheless, the PLO prefers to emphasize its position and comply with international wishes by asserting its antiterrorist attitude. However, it maintained its right to resort to legitimate means, including armed struggle, to defend the cause of its people.

The U.S. Administration has tried to imprint in the Western mind the image of terrorist Arabs and Palestinians who are good for nothing except spilling blood and killing innocents. Through this, the U.S. Administration seems to have sought to cover up its own terrorist image in order to depict itself as the leading counterterrorism nation. Thus, to be the only state that does not counter terrorism, but monopolizes it, encouraged by the preoccupation of the eastern states, especially the Soviet Union, with their internal affairs. Thus, the U.S. Administration's terrorist ideas were given free rein.

After direct U.S. interference in other nations' internal affairs was not well received by states friendly to the United States, Washington invented a new terrorist method to circumvent the world public opinion, which rejects terrorism. According to this method, acts of sabotage are carried out from within. This is a case in which sabotage is seen as a technical failure or an internal act of sabotage, which the Americans ostensibly have nothing to do with. Moreover, it may even denounce such an action.

The fire that broke out at the Libyan al-Rabitah factory was preceded by U.S. threats and warnings that a certain action would be carried out against the factory. These threats were aimed at paving the way for that act of sabotage. This makes the direct accusation to the United States that it is involved in this operation incontestable. Likewise, the same mode of sabotage was followed and the same fingers were responsible for the destruction last year of part of an Iraqi weapons factory.

What the Americans and Israel fear most is free Arab military industrialization. In addition to the Arabs being spared the conditions of purchasing foreign weapons and the ensuing security, administrative, and financial complications, it is most feared this industry will not be under foreign control and hegemony. This would make the Americans and Israelis unfamiliar with Arab armaments. All the weapons imported by the Arabs, regardless of the source, are subject to U.S. control and knowledge, in one way or another, and, consequently that of Israel. This allows Israel to be familiar with Arab war capability, and always ready to confront it.

Arab war industry will deny the United States and Israel this privilege. This confirms the news media reports that said the United States is exerting intensive pressure to prevent Egypt from taking part in the project to produce the Condor-2 missile with Iraq.

This should alert us not only to the importance of war industrialization and developing it, but also to the need to maintain it, defend it, and set the required means to prevent the fingers of terrorism from reaching it.

'Arar: Coalition Breakup Buys Israel 'Time'

JN1603131690 Amman Domestic Service in English 1200 GMT 16 Mar 90

[Text] Mr. Sulayman 'Arar, speaker of the Lower House of Parliament, today said he was not optimistic over recent developments in Israel that led to the fall of Shamir's government. He said Israeli decisionmakers do not want real peace.

Mr. 'Arar said this fall was bound to buy Israel more time for consultations and for forming a new government. This, he noted, means further involvement in internal affairs, which would give Israel a better chance to settle Jewish immigrants.

Mr. 'Arar was speaking to the JORDANIAN NEWS AGENCY upon his return from Cairo, where he attended meetings of the African Parliamentary Union.

He said the meetings discussed the Soviet Jewish emigration to Israel and issued a resolution condemning it and warning against its dangers.

Muslim Brotherhood Urges Attacks on U.S. Targets

NC1703185890 Tehran International Service in Arabic 1730 GMT 17 Mar 90

[Text] The Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan yesterday called on the Arab countries to abandon the capitulationist attempts to end the conflict with the Zionist entity and to carry out collective military action against this entity. In a dispatch from Amman, AP said that this organization issued a statement condemning the Soviet Government for allowing Soviet Jews to emigrate to occupied Palestine. The statement stressed that allowing Soviet Jews to enter occupied Palestine proves the Zionist entity intends to expand the area of the occupied territories.

The Muslim Brotherhood also called for attacking U.S. interests in the Middle East.

Badran Meets PFLP Delegation for 'First Time'

JN2003093390 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 20 Mar 90 second edition pp 1, 20

[Text] Amman—Prime Minister Mudar Badran received a delegation from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] at his office yesterday. The delegation comprised PFLP Political Bureau members Taysir Qubba'ah and 'Azmi al-Khawaja.

The delegation expressed the PFLP's views on current political issues and the serious threats to the Arab nation and the Palestinian question, particularly Jewish immigration to the occupied territories and the threats this immigration poses to the Palestinian people and Jordan. The PFLP delegation also stressed its concern about the success of Jordan's democratic experiment, and expressed appreciation for Jordan's declared policy of supporting the Palestinian options and the PLO at international forums. It also expressed appreciation for the country's support for the Palestinian intifadah and the Palestinian people's legitimate national rights, foremost of which is their right to self-determination and to establishing their independent state.

The two sides agreed to pursue contacts to follow issues of joint interest and to discuss new developments.

It is worth noting it is the first time the prime minister has received a PFLP delegation.

King Congratulates Gorbachev on Election Results

JN1903130190 Amman Domestic Service in English 1200 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] His majesty the king today sent a cable of congratulations to Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev on the occasion of his election as president of the Soviet Union. His majesty expressed Jordan's support for Mr. Gorbachev's reform programs and his wise decisions to maintain his country's trend towards international peace and stability.

His majesty said Jordan appreciates the Soviet president's stands vis-a-vis Arab causes, including the Palestinian question, adding that he is looking forward to Moscow's continued support for the sake of achieving a just and permanent peace in the Middle East.

His majesty wished President Gorbachev good health and happiness and the Soviet people more progress and prosperity.

Hard Currency Reserve Amounts to $380 Million

JN1903130790 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] In Amman, Muhammad Sa'id al-Nabulsi, governor of the Central Bank of Jordan [CBJ], has stated the Kingdom's reserve from hard currency now amounts to $380 million. In a statement to the JORDANIAN NEWS AGENCY, al-Nabulsi said this reserve was approximately $500 million at the end of last December; however, it decreased because Jordan resumed repaying its external commitments at the beginning of this year, according to the agreement signed with the London Club. He said this reserve was stabilized at $400 million during the past month; it now amounts to approximately $380 million.

AL-HAYAH Cited on New French Plan for Unity

NC1903123690 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1145 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] The London-based newspaper AL-HAYAH reports that a new French plan is in the making. Under the plan, General 'Awn will be represented in a national unity government by Faruq Abu-al-Lam' [former secretary general of the Lebanese Foreign Ministry]. The newspaper says it is not known yet whether 'Awn and the Al-Huss government have accepted this face-saving formula. It should be noted that Abu-al-Lam' visited B'abda Palace today and met with Gen.'Awn.

Ibrahimi Tour Said Connected With Hostage Issue

NC1903132390 (Clandestine) The Lebanese Radio in Arabic 1200 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Informed sources have told AL-ANWAR newspaper that Arab envoy Lakhdar Ibrahimi's new diplomatic moves in the region, in addition to their connection with the Lebanese issue, are part of an effort to resolve the issue of the foreign hostages in Lebanon. Ibrahimi will visit Damascus after leaving occupied Beirut today to meet with Syrian officials. This aspect of Ibrahimi's mission is shrouded in secrecy. According to some media leaks, Algeria is behind what appears to be a mediation effort.

Ibrahimi later is due to leave for Rabat to submit a report on his tour to the tripartite committee, which will hold a meeting next Saturday.

Hizballah Denies Meeting Carter in Damascus

LD1903220790 Tehran IRNA in English 1700 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Beirut, March 19, IRNA—The Lebanese Hizballah today dismissed as "pure fabrication" an alleged meeting between two Hizballah officials and former U.S. President Jimmy Carter in Damascus.

It termed Monday's report in the Lebanese daily 'AL-DIYAR' "another frustrated bid" to involve the Hizballah in the case of the missing Westerners in Lebanon.

The spokesman reiterated that Hizballah has no link whatsoever with the reported hostage-taking.

AL-DIYAR quoting unnamed "diplomatic" sources claimed that Carter had discussed the issue of the missing Westerners with two ranking Hizballah officials during his recent visit to Damascus. Terming the atmosphere of the alleged meeting "cordial" the daily said the missing Westerners would be found in the near future provided Hizballah's conditions, on which Washington would be informed through Carter, are realized.

Elsewhere the daily claimed that Carter is to discuss the issue of Lebanese Muslim prisoner Anis Naccache with French officials during his visit to Paris.

'Awn Reportedly Receives Iraqi Weapons

NC2003071690 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 0530 GMT 20 Mar 90

[Text] Reliable sources have disclosed the al-Yarzah gangs ['Awn's army] recently received quantities of Iraqi weapons. The arms were shipped to the port of al-Dubayyah in small rubber boats, according to the sources.

Hizballah Radio: Amal Attacks Iqlim al-Tuffah

NC1803072390 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0630 GMT 18 Mar 90

[Text] Under heavy artillery cover, the Amal Movement launched a large-scale attack on the villages of Kafr Milki, Kafr Fila, and Tallat Jirnaya in Iqlim al-Tuffah at 1800 yesterday. The mujahidin [Hizballah fighters] repulsed the attack and the attackers left behind a number of dead and wounded.

After the attack failed, Amal shelled the area, firing 155-mm and 122-mm artillery rounds on Kafr Milki and other villages. Shells continue falling on the area.

Israeli Aircraft Fly Over Eastern Sidon

NC1903103490 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1015 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Israeli warplanes reconnoitered the southern airspace and flew at high altitude over eastern Sidon today, drawing antiaircraft fire.

Amal-Hizballah Clashes Resume in South

NC1903104690 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1015 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Calm now prevails on all of the new combat lines in the eastern areas. However, machinegun fire was directed at the Lebanese Forces positions in J'ita at approximately 1145 today.

In another development, clashes resumed between the Amal Movement and Hizballah in Iqlim al-Tufah today. Machineguns and some rockets were used in the fighting.

Amal, Hizballah Fighters Placed on Alert 19 Mar

NC1903184490 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Tension reigns in Iqlim al-Tuffah following the outbreak of clashes between the Amal Movement and Hizballah this morning.

The movement and Hizballah placed their troops on alert in the wake of reports that Hizballah gunmen riding in two cars abducted someone in Zuqaq al-Balat [in West Beirut] today and carted him off to an area near the Iranian Embassy.

In another development, security sources said today a clash occurred yesterday between Syrian intelligence personnel and others belonging to the al-Maradah [former President Sulayman Franjiyah's militia] in al-Batrun. A Syrian intelligence member was killed and two others wounded, and a member of al-Maradah militia was slightly injured. Soon afterward, members of the al-Maradah militia took up positions in 'Ibrin and al-Batrun.

Israeli, Lahd Militia Activities in South

NC2003084590 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0530 GMT 20 Mar 90

[Text] Reports from the South speak of Israeli military movements between Marj 'Uyun and the al-Ahmadiyah hills. According to these reports, enemy forces and militiamen have besieged Hasbayya and searched the roads around it. They demolished the only house that was still standing in Mazra'at Lusya.

In al-Khiyam, enemy forces stormed the house of Samar Abu-'Ayyash and detained her on the pretext she had collaborated with resistance fighters.

An explosive charge went off near the house of agent Nidal Jamal in Hasbayya. The results of the explosion could not be determined because the enemy forces threw a cordon around the area.

Resistance fighters fired several Katyusha rockets at the agent militia positions at the Zummarayya crossing point and hill. Columns of smoke were seen rising from these positions.

The militias shelled the Mimis area and al-Dahr hills. Israeli occupation forces fired flares over Kawkaba and the al-Dahr hills last night.

Israeli Military Operation Said Planned in South

NC2003092790 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0900 GMT 20 Mar 90

[Text] Citing Lebanese political sources, the QATARI NEWS AGENCY reports Israel is preparing to launch a wide-scale operation outside the occupied border strip in southern Lebanon. The sources affirmed that extensive Israeli military forces, accompanied by a large number of Israeli military intelligence personnel, have entered villages and towns in the occupied border strip. The military intelligence personnel made an on-site inspection of the crossings between the occupied and the free areas. The same sources expect the Israeli operation to be carried out either in western al-Biqa' or in the south. Meanwhile, resistance fighters and local organizations are making preparations to confront any such military possibility, which usually takes place whenever there is an acute political crisis in occupied Palestine.

Israeli Planes Fly Over Sidon, Mountain Area

NC2003101490 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1000 GMT 20 Mar 90

[Text] Israeli warplanes flew several sorties over the Palestinian camps in Sidon this morning, drawing anti-aircraft fire. The hostile planes broke the sound barrier over the mountain area a short while ago.

'Fierce' Fighting in Eastern Area Noted

NC1803181790 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 18 Mar 90

[Text] The situation flared up in the eastern area, and fierce fighting involving various types of machine guns and rockets has been raging along the various contact lines since 1830. Four phosphorous shells hit residential areas in Sinn al-Fil. Shells also landed in the areas of Jisr al-Wati, Salome, and Sinn al-Fil.

Army Positions in al-Dubayyah Come Under Fire

NC1903132090 (Clandestine) The Lebanese Radio in Arabic 1200 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Lebanese Forces mortar emplacements in the Yasu' al-Malik area bombarded Army positions and residential neighborhoods in al-Dubayyah this morning. A soldier also was injured by sniper fire directed at Army positions in Sinn al-Fil from the opposite positions. A shell fell on an Army position in Ra's al-Nab'.

We also have learned Army positions in Biskinta and Kafr 'Uqab have been coming under 82-mm and 120-mm mortar fire since 1345 today.

Fighting Reported in Kasrawan, al-Matn 19 Mar

NC1903150990 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1415 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Security incidents erupted this afternoon along the battlelines in the Kasrawan heights and northern al-Matn. Army units disregarded two cease-fire agreements, the second of which was reached at 1545 today. Army long-range artillery emplacements in Qurnat Shahwan and Bayt Shabab are directing 155-mm and 130-mm shells at Bakish, 'Ajlatun, and other areas.

The following incidents occurred today: At 1250 an artillery shell fell on Bakish from an Army position in al-Shawi. An Army position in Darayya fired a 120-mm shell at al-Qulay'at.

At 1430 Bakish came under artillery fire from Army emplacements in Qurnat Shahwan. Flat-trajectory fire was directed from Bayt Shabab at 'Ajlatun.

At 1437 Bakish was bombarded from positions in Qurnat Shahwan.

At 1515 a cease-fire agreement was reached, but the Army disregarded it.

At 1545 a second cease-fire was reached, but the Army again disregarded it. The shelling of 'Ajlatun and Bakish still was going on at 1605 today.

'Violent Clashes' Reportedly Raging in E. Beirut

NC1903154690 Ihdin Radio of Free and Unified Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Violent clashes involving various types of artillery, rocket, and tank weapons are taking place on the newly created combat lines in East Beirut. Shells are falling on residential areas.

Explosion Near Carlton Hotel Wounds One Person

NC1903212590 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 2100 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] An explosion was heard at 2230 this evening. An explosive device went off near the Carlton Hotel in al-Rawshah (in West Beirut), wounding one person and causing property damage.

Al-Zu'bi Urges 'Crucial Decisions' in Production

JN1903211790 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1615 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Excerpts] This morning, Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi met with comrade members of the annual general congress of the Damascus Workers Federation. Attending the meeting also were comrade 'Izz- al-Din Nasir, member of the Regional Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and president of the general union of the workers federation; Mahmud Qaddur, deputy prime minister for services; Yasin Rajjuh, state minister for cabinet affairs; Antoine Jubran, industry minister; comrade Dr. 'Ala'-al-Din 'Abdeen, the Damascus party secretary; and Amin Abu-al-Shamat, the governor of Damascus.

After the meeting discussed union and production-related issues, the prime minister said that over the years, it has been the proletariat that has endured sacrifices and taken the brunt of responsibility for production. Al-Zu'bi added: It may be said in light of the issues raised and the proposals made at your congress that numerous concerns ought to be addressed in the areas of administration and production, and that crucial decisions must be made to rectify bureaucratic and production defects. [passage omitted]

The prime minister stressed that over the coming year the government will apply a system of accountability to production programs, wages, prices, incentives, and tax plans. Al-Zu'bi said that following directives from His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad, we have set ourselves the goal of self-sufficiency in agriculture and industry and in all areas of production. We are determined to make production capital available and make the most of all available resources, he added. [passage omitted]

Al-Zu'bi emphasized that the public sector will be the principal factor in the national economy and that the government views the private and mixed sectors as complementary to the public sector.

Foreign Minister Returns From Tehran Visit

JN1903213990 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 2115 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Excerpt] Damascus—Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' returned to Damascus this evening at the conclusion of a two-day official visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran. [passage omitted]

AL-BA'TH: Arabs Cannot Remain 'Spectators'

JN1803085290 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0545 GMT 18 Mar 90

[From the press review]

[Text] In its editorial today the newspaper AL-BA'TH comments on the stepped up international campaign opposing Soviet Jewish emigration to occupied Palestine and their settlement in the Arab territories, and the differences which allegedly emerged within the enemy's entity on U.S. Secretary of State Baker's plan, despite the fact that this plan does not run against Israeli thinking. AL-BA'TH adds: It is possible for the Arabs to maintain some presence and influence on all that has been happening if they so wish. We are saying that the scene should not be left for the world Zionist movement and its various organizations. We repeat for the thousandth time that the Arabs possess the capabilities that enable them to play a great and influential role in this or that world or regional event. It is no longer acceptable for us to remain spectators to the developments taking place in this big world, as these developments are taking place at an amazingly rapid pace.

Concluding its editorial, AL-BA'TH says: What has been called a cabinet crisis within the Zionist entity is certainly only a malicious gimmick to hide things which might be difficult to predict. We are sure, however, that something targeting Arabs in general is being hatched.

Paper Rebuts Criticism of Recent Al-Asad Speech

JN1403161290 Damascus TISHRIN in Arabic 11 Mar 90 p 8

["Behind the News" column by Mustafa al-Faqir: "No Freedom Without Sacrifices"]

[Text] The facts of past and contemporary history confirm that nations that have attained their freedom, seized their rights, and improved their lot have only succeeded in doing so by relying on their own strength, making sacrifices, and refusing to capitulate or bargain over their homelands and national soil. Similarly, the facts also confirm that nations that have fallen into oblivion met their unavoidable fate simply because they gave up, refused to fight, and sought their safety in the goodwill and generosity of the invading troops.

How like yesterday is today! The Arabs have so far continued to face Israel's grand designs through appeals, condemnations, and rhetoric. Not only this, we see people calling for exclusive reliance on political efforts to confront the Zionist schemes at a time when the enemy is piling up conventional and unconventional weapons in its arsenals and saying openly that it will neither return the occupied Arab territories nor recognize the Palestinian people's rights, particularly their right to self-determination. This enemy is bragging that Arab Jerusalem has become part of a city that has been reunited once and for all and that this reunited city has become the capital of Israel. Moreover, the enemy is saying that the other occupied territories constitute a lebensraum necessary for settling new immigrants and that its efforts to establish Greater Israel are irreversible.

Every day, Arabs are martyred on Palestinian or Lebanese territory by the bullets of the Zionist enemy, while the Palestinians are being asked to lay down their arms and renounce armed struggle in order to demonstrate

their goodwill. Nobody is asking Israel to show its goodwill by stopping the killing of Arabs.

When one Zionist is killed, the West brandishes the accusation of terrorism and threatens the Palestinians with stopping the "settlement" process. This is happening while Israel perpetrates acts of killing on a daily basis. The only difference is that in the latter case, nobody talks about terrorism.

We would like to pose the following question: What would happen if the Arabs were to pursue "political efforts" exclusively? If they choose to wait for the generosity and goodwill of the enemy, they will have to wait for a very long time. The Israeli leaders are drawing up plans to evict the Arabs of the West Bank and Gaza and to displace all Palestinians. This is no longer a secret. Have they not addressed the Palestinians publicly, saying: Do you want a state? Your state is there on the eastern bank of the Jordan River.

The Western powers, particularly the United States, have promised to put pressure on Israel to make it soften its position and join the bandwagon of "peace efforts." Contacts in this respect have been going on for months. These pressures are receding every day in the face of Israel's intransigence. The proof is the following: Any PLO role in the dialogue is ruled out, the dialogue in question will tackle neither the right to self-determination nor the Palestinian people's freedom, and a Palestinian state and a national identity for the Palestinians are out of the question too. To add insult to injury, the Palestinians are being asked to halt their intifadah if they desire to have local elections resembling municipal elections. Moreover, Israel would have to be provided with numerous guarantees, while the Palestinian people would be deprived of a single guarantee that they would attain their freedom one day.

President al-Asad laid special emphasis on Arab unity and solidarity and stressed the need for the Arabs act to face up to the Greater Israel scheme. In addition, President al-Asad stressed the need to continue the militant struggle regardless of the long time involved. Furthermore, President al-Asad called for making preparations for a protracted struggle and for having self-confidence, as the land is ours and the time is ours too. President al-Asad also said that the Arabs have the strength and the capabilities to seize their rights if they unify their efforts and make a determined attempt to gain freedom. Because President al-Asad said all these things, well-known international quarters have publicly expressed dissatisfaction and fear and that such statements would undermine "the peace process".

What are the Arabs being asked to do? Nothing, but to yield to occupation and to submit to Zionist tyranny. Certainly, the struggle is an arduous effort requiring formidable sacrifices. However, the end result of such an effort is the removal of the occupation and the restoration of the occupied lands. This is the path taken by many nations that have regained their freedom and rights, and is the one abandoned by many others that have been wiped off the map of the world.

Afghanistan

Mojaddedi Alleges Soviet Pullout 'Only Partial'

BK2003103490 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN TIMES in English 20 Mar 90 p 3

[By special correspondent]

[Text] Islamabad—Prof. Sebghatullah Mojaddedi, President of the Islamic Interim Government of Afghanistan stated on Monday [19 March] that the Afghan people are true Muslims and, therefore, not extremists.

Islam enjoins moderation and the Afghans are "moderate and modern" in their attitudes, he added.

The AIG [Afghan Interim Government] President was inaugurating an impressive Afghan Jehad [holy war] Exhibition to commemorate the first anniversary of Soviet military withdrawal from his country.

The exhibition, besides displaying a substantial array of arms captured by Afghan Mujahidin also manifested the rich cultural life of the Afghan people.

As the AIG Minister for Information Dr. Najibullah Lafraie, organiser of the exhibition, asserted that the women were very much a part of the Afghan life; embroidery and other handicrafts created by women, were also included in the exhibition; Maps and photographs depicting the picturesque topography of the country and paintings containing powerful images of Afghans struggle in the face of vast devastation the country suffered after the induction of foreign forces. [sentence as published]

Prof. Mojaddedi alleged that the Soviet forces pullout was only partial because quite a few Russian soldiers were still fighting in Afghanistan, clad in Afghan army uniforms.

Questioned about the recent abortive coup d'etat in Kabul against Najib government in which Engineer Golbuddin Hekmatyar reportedly cooperated with Khalq Party's mutinous military generals, the AIG President said this was against the decision of the Interim government which did not want to have any truck with the PDPA [People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan]. The Afghan people, too, had not taken kindly to the development, he commented.

He further asserted that the Mujahidin's position had improved in Afghanistan and they had scored some victories on the battleground.

About elections of the Interim Government, he disclosed that a delegation of mujahidin Pir Gaylani, leader of the national Islamic Front of Afghanistan, had gone to Teheran to persuade the Iran-based mujahidin to join in the elections. "We will go ahead with elections even if they don't agree," Prof. Mojaddedi stated.

In his speech, the AIG President thanked Pakistan, Iran, Egypt, Arab and other countries which assisted the Afghan people in their jehad and promised to maintain specially good relations with them after victory of the war of liberation.

Members of all the Peshawar-based mujahidin parties except the Hezb-e Eslami faction led by Mr. Hekmatyar joined about four hundred Afghans in making the inaugural ceremony of the exhibition a success. The Hezb leader has dissociated from the AIG.

Earlier, the AIG Information Minister, Dr. Najibullah said Perestroyka and Glasnost proved the invincibility of Afghan mujahidin who had inspired the East European peoples to throw off the yoke of foreign domination.

The purpose of the exhibition, he said, was to bring home to the people of Pakistan that the war of liberation is still on. It also shows that the Jehad is not all combat but it embraced the cultural aspects of life too.

As part of the exhibition, which will be open for five days, films depicting the Afghan Jehad will also be screened at its venue—Capital Hotel, Islamabad—from Tuesday.

Najibullah Makes Plenum Closing Speech

LD1903220490 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1630 GMT 18 Mar 90

[Concluding speech by President Najibullah, general secretary of the PDPA Central Committee, at the PDPA Central Committee Plenum in Kabul on 18 March—recorded]

[Text] Dear comrades, the work of our plenum has come to an end. Views, proposals and criticism expressed by comrades during their speeches will certainly help the Central Committee to continue its future activities. The speakers stressed the fact that the party, by foiling the failed coup d'etat, has again overcome a hard test and has gained further support among the people.

The speakers mentioned that the main factor for successfully combatting the conspiracies was the party's correct policy and the role of the national reconciliation policy as a great policy. They emphasized that victory over the plot is the result of the victory of the national reconciliation policy over war and warmongers. At the moment the national reconciliation policy has obtained more serious guarantees for victory. They have mentioned that by foiling the conspiracy and crushing the leaders of the deviated extremist group, the unity of the party has been strengthened. They have asked that detailed information be given to the party about the background of the deviated extremist group and its network. They have stated that consolidation of party order and discipline, and intensifying the questioning of party members, regardless of their posts, is a serious need at the present moment. The request by one of the speakers that Central

Committee members should display true loyalty—greater than any other party members—practical unity, and the ability to implement the party's decisions, is fully supported by us.

Let the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan [PDPA] Central Committee members remember this invitation always, as a powerful and warning voice from the alert party ranks. Having approved the calm reaction by the party and the sovereign authorities of the Republic of Afghanistan during the preparation for the conspiracy, they demanded that the coup plotters should be punished to the maximum legal extent. The speakers decisively condemned the treacherous action by the coup plotters and the antiparty group as an antinational, antipeace and antiparty movement, and demanded that the party should take a firm line on the perpetrators of the plot, and should never allow the creation of conditions for a repetition of such incidents. [words indistinct] Therefore, it is fair to answer this question about the principle reasons for our victory in this test. In our view, the party's victory over the conspirators was the result of the three following main reasons:

1. The party was saved from the destructive danger by its unity, concord and mutual understanding, and by its accurate reaction to the danger. The decisive support of the absolute majority of cadres and party organizations for the principled stance, deprived the conspirators of an effective instrument for destroying and annihilating the party. After the successful experience of independent defense and complete defeat of the failed coup d'etat, unity has emerged with pride from the ordeal by fire, all the party primary organizations and committees and each party member, from top to bottom, should work toward strengthening the organic unity of party. The organic unity of the party requires joint action by all party organizations to implement its political policy and protect the party from all types of harmful and weakening phenomenon. Party unity does not have anything in common with the conservative and negotiation slogans about factional unity, which the factionalists and opportunities misused. The party's aim of deepening unity does not depend on maintaining a mechanical balance between this faction and that faction, or this group and that group, or between the Khalqis and Parchamis: it depends on achieving total party dynamism and movement free of any factional, grouping, and [word indistinct] connections. Its achievement can only be made possible through sufficiently broad thinking, loyalty to the interests of the people and homeland, understanding of the total interests of the party, and rejecting bravely all emotional, shortsighted and prejudicial connections. Certainly, none of us want to see a repetition of incidents similar to the failed coup d'etat in the party's history and the state's sovereignty, or even in our imagination.

The only way to ensure such a noble goal is to eliminate the conditions that breed conspiracies, that is, to eliminate inclinations toward factions, group and circles. Let each Central Committee member, central investigation commission, each cadre and party activist and member, prove their loyalty to the party, homeland, and people by displaying such a high character.

2. Overcoming the failed coup d'etat—which was unprecedented in the history of Afghanistan from the standpoint of scale and numbers of forces used—was possible as a result of the people's support for state sovereignty, which is in fact a manifestation of their eternal support for the national reconciliation policy. This truth is a cause for great pleasure: that the conspirators did not gain the support of the people anywhere. On the contrary, any fresh news about foiling and crushing the coup plotters gave fresh spirit, like pure water to the thirsty body of the people. The consolidation of ties with the people and attraction of their trust will always head the party's list of duties. Our party has arisen from the Muslim people of Afghanistan and should be at their service each moment and in every place. People are not only in the party and in society, but they are everywhere, and they live and work in shops, in mosques, in villages, in cities and organizations. We should understand the needs and problems of the people everywhere, and should help to solve them to the limits of our ability. People support the national reconciliation policy and are in favor of expanding it rapidly to ensure peace and stability in the country as soon as possible. In the complex of measures to implement the national reconciliation policy and reconstruction of the party, the party's aim is to respond to the people's demand. It is only through acceleration of the movement, without delay, toward peace, that we can expect people to give their votes, with no doubts in tomorrow's world-without-war, to the serious supporters of peace; that is, the representatives of the PDPA, the party of heroes, the party of martyrs. Strengthening work with the people, and direct contacts and ways to implement cadre policy [word indistinct]. In the course of appointing and electing cadres to authoritive posts—as has been said by all comrades—the Central Committee and party committees should take into account their worth, from a political, practical, and morale viewpoint. In other words, when appointing cadres, a fundamental assessement of their loyalty to the homeland and the national reconciliation policy, their ability to work with people and involve them in the implementation of the reconciliation policy, and their popularity among the people, should be the principle standard of judgement. The party needs fresh cadres, reconciliation cadres; that is, cadres which better understand the need to reconstruct the party and who are ready to work in such a party, new in nature. It is the duty of party committees to support such cadres and give them opportunity to work.

Comrades, we cannot ignore the following issues in this connection, which worry all the party and people:

First, it is true that we have been engaged in a difficult defense and it is also true that we were involved in a series of natural disasters. How then can we ignore the high cost and inflation that is making life much more difficult every day for the people. The people's living

standards are being painfully lowered. Dear comrades, we do understand the objective cause, but, no amount of reasoning can fill the empty stomach of a hungry person. The plenum should put serious demands to the party committees and party members who work in state organs, in order to improve the economic situation and prevent a reduction in the living standards of families. Taking into account the beginning of the spring sowing campaign, all party members in state organs or party committees are duty bound to help peasants and land owners by using all their power and resources so that not even one inch of agricultural land should remain uncultivated. We should attribute primary importance to securing basic goods needed by the people, and party committees be more dynamic in organizing affairs better in this vital sphere. The party, by using its resources, should accelerate assistance to the suffering agricultural regions and other localities which require urgent assistance.

Second, the Central Committee should investigate the disturbing signs of plundering, misuse of funds, bribery, embezzlement and mismanagement in the departments under the leadership of party Central Committee members; and even the participation of a number of party members in such obscene actions. Such actions are not only treacherous, antipeople, antinational, but, they are considered to be unforgivable crimes against the party and hostile actions diminishing its credit and prestige. The plenum should invite committees, primary organizations and all party members to combat decisively such shameful phenomena.

First of all the Central Committee members in high posts should take part in this campaign. In the case of receiving proven facts about the party committing the aforementioned crimes, the Central Committee Control Commission is authorized to adopt a decisive party approach toward those involved, regardless of their positions and posts, to reveal their names without any mercy and hand them over to the law. For the party cannot have any standing among the people without moral purity.

3. Foiling and crushing the failed plot was the result of bravery and heroism by the heroic Armed Forces personnel of the Republic of Afghanistan, the result of the existing high level of coordination and mutual understanding among the leading cadres of all three organs of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan. The Politburo believes that making any distinction in the role and participation of this or that organ of the Armed Forces in crushing the conspiracy will deepen misunderstandings and generate emotional and class propaganda, and will seriously add grist to the enemy's mill. The failed plot proves that regardless of a series of diplomatic moves to demonstrate a belief in a political solution, the ruling circles in the United States and Pakistan are still not ready to refrain from resorting to adventures, and interference in our country.

Therefore, against its will and intentions, in the coming year the party should prepare all its forces to foil and crush the new attacks by Pakistani militarists and the extremists linked with them. At present, we not only need to enhance the combat readiness of civilian forces, but also party organizations and all their members should contribute, as before, toward enhancing the defense and combat campability of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan. The other action that can guarantee our victory in future is the strengthening and consolidation of unity in the party, people, and Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan, as well as ensuring a high level of understanding, coordination and joint action by the Armed Forces against the warmongering extremists and their foreign supporters. We address the combatant members of the PDPA in the Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan:

Comrades, party members, lion hearts of our beloved country. By your independent defense of the Republic of Afghanistan and your decisive crushing of the antinational conspiracy you have displayed the highest examples of bravery, gallantry, patriotism and political awareness. Understanding the urgent needs of the present moment, further consolidate your unity and cohesion; and be ready with an iron will to crush any type of interference and aggression by the foreigners and their mercenaries. We are confident that the self-sacrificing children of our homeland will attain the last destiny, fighting with pride, and will bring peace and prosperity to our suffering people.

I wish you all success and pride in fulfilling the important, responsible, skilfull, and new tasks adopted in the present plenum and in your struggle to fully implement the national reconciliation policy. Thank you. [applause]

Najibullah Receives Provincial Elders, Leaders

LD1903234290 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] The president of Afghanistan, esteemed Najibullah, this morning met with the elders and leaders of Parvan, Bamiyan, and Kapisa Provinces at the Foreign Ministry conference hall. The meeting began with the recitation of a few verses from the holy Koran. Then a representative of the people of Parvan Province, Khwaja Da'ud Shah Ayni; Shaykh Azim Ahmadi; 'Abdallah, from Kapisa Province; chairman of the national reconciliation commission of Paravan province, 'Abdol Shokur and one other elder of the province, Gholam Sakhi, and some other elders from these provinces spoke and, first of all, congratulated the heroic Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan, under the leadership of esteemed Najibullah, on aborting the coup attempt by Golbuddin and Shahnawaz. They denounced the shameless and treacherous conspiracy by the coup plotters which was against the high interests of the country and people and against national reconciliation. They said that these national traitors should be punished for their criminal actions. The representatives of the people of

these provinces expressed support for the policy of national reconciliation and stated their all-round support for realizing the policy of national reconciliation, for restoring peace and for an end to war.

Then esteemed Najibullah shed light on the antihuman and antipopular aims of the attempt coup of 6 March and expressed gratitude for the cooperation of the people in neutralizing this treacherous conspiracy by the enemies of the people of Afghanistan. The esteemed president said: I am pleased to be among you today. The victory of the country's heroic Armed Forces against the shameful attempted coup by Golbuddin and Shahnawaz was the result of the heroism of your children and the legitimate determination by the people that once again the conspiracy of the enemies of the freedom of our country and another great historical service was accomplished in defending the freedom, independence, national sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country. The example of courage set by our brave fathers have been reflected in their brave children.

Exposing the sinister aims of the coup plotters, esteemed Najibullah said that by crushing this treacherous conspiracy, not only were our people saved from a great danger, but this victory has a great value in the region because Pakistani militarists, in cooperation with Golbuddin and Shahnawaz, wanted not only to create a bloodbath in Afghanistan and bring about an extremist regime, but wanted to transform the region into a battlefield and bloodbath. However, fortunately all their sinister plans were foiled. Speaking about the decisions by the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan [PDPA] Central Committee plenum of 18 March in connection with the measures by the republican state concerning the expansion of the policy of national reconciliation, the esteemed president said that important topics were discussed in the PDPA Central Committee Plenum which are of great value in realizing the work of national reconciliation. Esteemed Najibullah asked for further solidarity and unity of the people in maintaining overall peace in the country.

After that a gift from these provinces' people was presented to esteemed Najibullah by an elder which was accepted with thanks.

Watanjar, Mangal Address Defense Ministry Staff

LD1903215190 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] General Muhammad Aslam Watanjar, the minister of defense of the Republic of Afghanistan, today introduced Lieutenant General Manoki Mangal, chief of the Army political affairs Department to the leadership and members of the Ministry of Defense Headquarters.

According to a report by the military section of the BIA [BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY], the minister of defense spoke at the meeting—which was attended by General Mohammad Asef Delawar, chief of the general staff; General 'Abdol Baqi, head of the defense and security department of the Presidency; and General Zabihollah Ziarmal—on the great tasks and responsibilities of the members of the Army for the defense of independence, national sovereignty, and territorial integrity, the implementation of national reconciliation, and the strengthening of the political and ideologic work among units. Lieutenant General Manoki Mangal assured those present he would work resolutely for the restoration of peace and security in the country, and for the complete implementation of the national reconciliation policy.

Bangladesh

Unofficial Estimates Say Jatiya Party Leads Polls

BK2003054490 Hong Kong AFP in English 0536 GMT 20 Mar 90

[Text] Dhaka, March 20 (AFP)—Rising election violence in Bangladesh left another three people dead Tuesday [20 March], as forty-five more Bangladesh sub-districts went to the polls, reports reaching here said. Press reports said three more activists were killed and several hurt during armed clashes between rival groups in southern Naria and southeastern Boalkhali and Sandwip sub-districts Monday, the sixth day of local council elections. Violence linked to the elections, which started last Wednesday, has so far left at least five people dead and hundreds injured, the reports said.

Earlier, one man was reported killed in a gun fight between rival groups at Boalkhali, where activists set up road blockades to protest the killing. However, police later reopened the road and detained three people, reports said, adding that a college student also died in Sandwip after a grenade he was carrying in his pocket exploded.

Police failed to reopen a road connecting southeastern Rangamati and Khagrachari hill districts with the port city of Chittagong Monday, four days after enraged activists set up blockades alleging vote rigging at Hathazari sub-district.

Meanwhile, unofficial estimates published here Tuesday showed that candidates backed by President Hussain Mohammad Ershad's ruling Jatiya Party (JP) were leading in the vote, closely followed by arch rivals Awami League (AL) of Sheikh Hasina Wajed.

By Monday, polling had been completed in 218 of the total 426 sub-districts and unofficial results in 174 sub-districts showed the JP had won 64 seats, the AL 60 and independent candidates another 25.

Although the 12-day staggered polls are being held on a non-party basis, all major political groups have fielded candidates, who are "indirectly" using symbols or photographs in campaign posters to indicate their party allegiances.

Tension was also running high in several other areas as opposing groups briefly clashed during Monday's polling in 28 sub-districts, reports said.

President Ershad Departs for 2-Day Italian Visit

BK2003020290 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 0110 GMT 20 Mar 90

[Text] President Ershad left Dhaka last night for Rome on a two-day official visit to Italy. He is accompanied by Begum Raushan Ershad. The presidential entourage also includes Foreign Minister Anisul Islam Mahmud; A.N.M. Bahaul Haq, MP [member of parliament]; and Abdur Rab Chowdhury, MP. The president was seen off at the Zia International Airport by Deputy Prime Minister Shah Moazzam Hussain, ministers, chiefs of three services, and civil and military officials, and diplomats.

In Rome, President Ershad will meet Italian President Francesco Cossiga. He will hold talks with Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti. [passage indistinct]

Ershad Accepts Resignation of Finance Minister

BK1603155190 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 16 Mar 90

[Text] Finance Minister Dr. Wahidul Haq has resigned. President Ershad has accepted his resignation. Mr. M.A. Munim has been given the portfolio of the Finance Ministry instead of his present portfolio of the Ministry of Agriculture.

Town Besieged by Mob; Government Offices Ablaze

BK1703162090 Hong Kong AFP in English 1609 GMT 17 Mar 90

[Text] Dhaka, March 17 (AFP)—A violent crowd went on a rampage in the northeastern Bangladesh town of Sylhet for a second day Saturday, burning offices and uprooting railway lines, residents said by telephone. The mob was protesting alleged excesses by paramilitary troops on local civilians a day earlier.

Demonstrators set fire to a local newspaper office, an army recruiting centre and the town office of the national airlines Biman, the residents said. They also ransacked a municipal office and damaged a building housing the state-run Radio Bangladesh.

Police and security forces stayed away as a violent mob attacked the local railway station, damaged a stationary mail train and removed railway tracks, an editor at a local daily said. He said a complete general strike continued to grip the tea-growing town Saturday with schools, government offices, banks and markets shut and vehicules off the streets. The editor said that some 30,000 people had fled their homes in about 15 villages around the Paramilitary Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) camp where the trouble began Friday [16 March].

A passenger in a bus waiting at a security checkpoint threw a cigarette butt out of the window which fell on an on-duty sentry. Offended BDR guards allegedly beat up bus passengers, sparking immediate protests from local residents who clashed with security forces. Unconfirmed reports said three people were killed and more than 100 were injured during violence when the BDR allegedly opened fire.

The violence soon gripped the whole town of 170,000 residents as angry mobs went on a rampage, stoning government vehicles and damaging offices. Local officials have denied that anyone was killed during the violence. They said they had recovered one of three rifles snatched away by a mob from three BDR men at a bazaar during the violence, adding that 33 BDR personnel had been injured.

A resident said the local office of the daily JALALABADI was burned to the ground by a group protesting that the paper's Saturday issue did not headline the alleged deaths of the three on Friday. The protesters also prevented police and firefighters from going to the scene, the resident said.

Officials said the BDR chief and other senior officials had rushed to Sylhet.

At a rally in a town park Saturday, local political leaders said that the work stoppage would continue Sunday but would be partially relaxed. They said, however, that demonstrators would keep all government offices in the town closed until those responsible for the Friday's excesses were punished.

DPRK Information Delegation Concludes Visit

BK1903073590 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 0700 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] The leader of the three-member North Korean delegation, Mr. Song pong-Sun, has described the visit to Bangladesh as excellent. Mr. Song pong-Sun, who is the deputy chairman of the North Korean Information Committee, was talking informally to the media representatives at the secretariate in Dhaka at the end of their nine-day visit. He said their visit will help further expand the existing cooperation in the field of information and strengthen existing friendly relations between the two countries.

As already reported, the delegation signed an agreement on information during the visit. The secretary, the Ministry of Information, Mr. Sayed Amir, also spoke.

Ershad Congratulates Gorbachev on Election

BK1603125290 Dhaka Overseas Service in English 1230 GMT 16 Mar 90

[Text] President Ershad has warmly felicitated Mr. Mikhhail Gorbachev on his election as the first executive president of the Soviet Union. In a message to the Soviet president, President Ershad expressed his sincere hopes

and firm confidence that under his able and dynamic leadership, the friendly people of the Soviet Union will attain their dream of a prosperous and happy society. President Ershad expressed his conviction that the Soviet president will continue his contribution to the evolving of a new global order of peace, stability, and harmony. He also wished health, happiness, and success of Mr. Gorbachev.

India

Gujral Asks Pakistan To Eschew 'Confrontation'

BK1703151290 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1430 GMT 17 Mar 90

[Text] The external affairs minister, Mr. Inder Kumar Gujral, has expressed the hope that Pakistan would try to follow reason and join India in its efforts to normalize relations between the two countries. In a speech at a seminar on India's foreign policy in the 1990's read out in absentia, Mr. Gujral said India would continue to persuade Pakistan to eschew the path of confrontation and join the road of dialogue and mutual cooperation. He said that Pakistan, by appealing to the sentiments of the Muslim ummah and inciting trouble within our territory, had conveniently chosen to overlook the fact that India has more Muslims than Pakistan.

Devi Lal Explains Resignation in Letter to Singh

BK1703151690 Hong Kong AFP in English 1510 GMT 17 Mar 90

[Text] New Delhi, March 17 (AFP)—Devi Lal said in a letter to Indian Prime Minister Vishwanath Pratap Singh that he resigned as deputy prime minister because colleagues saw him as a liability, the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) reported Saturday.

According to excerpts of the letter published by PTI, Mr. Devi Lal said he protested Mr. V.P. Singh's silence on a visit by Industries Minister Ajit Singh to a constituency in Haryana State, where Mr. Devi Lal's son has been accused of engineering poll violence and rigging. The visit was made to investigate the violence, even though Mr. Devi Lal's party, the Janata Dal, had agreed to a repoll, and Mr. V.P. Singh's silence on the visit was tantamount to approval, the letter reportedly said.

PTI did not say how it obtained the "lengthy letter" it said Mr. Devi Lal, 76, handed to the prime minister Friday night. The resignation presented the 105-day old minority government with its first serious internal political crisis.

Mr. Devi Lal also said the cabinet had disregarded his advice in the new government's political appointments, and the promotion of one of his old political foes as attorney general, according to the letter.

Party sources have said that the main cause of Mr. Devi Lal's widening rift with party colleagues has been his determination to protect his son, Om Prakash Chauthala, who succeded him as chief minister of Haryana State and who is held responsible for the Meham poll violence. India's leading news magazine INDIA TODAY, which has a video branch, last week showed gory film footage of villagers being bludgeoned to death during the Meham elections. The scenes severely embarrassed the new government and the allies it depends on to stay in power—the right wing Bharatiya Janata Party and the left parties.

Newspapers Saturday greeted the resignation with shock, with some questioning whether members of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's Congress (I) Party might be trying to woo Mr. Devi Lal to defect. Others quoted party colleagues and Janata Dal Party Spokesman Jaipal Reddy expressing confidence that Mr. Devi Lal could be talked into withdrawing his resignation.

The Calcutta-based TELEGRAPH suggested that Mr. Devi Lal had made the move to silence critics of his son, and Mr. Devi Lal himself told reporters Friday he would not quit the Janata Dal.

The Bombay-based INDEPENDENT said flatly that the resignation move had been designed to block party demands that his son step down as chief minister.

By late Saturday Mr. Devi Lal had made no further public statement, and there was no statement from Mr. V.P. Singh who visited Indian President Ramaswamy Vekataraman in the morning. The contents of the prime minister's discussion with the president were not made public.

Agrees To Withdraw Resignation

BK1803125490 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 18 Mar 90

[Text] Mr. Devi Lal has agreed to withdraw his resignation from the union cabinet at the request of the prime minister. Speaking to newsmen in New Delhi a short while ago, a Janata Dal spokesman said that the prime minister, Mr. V.P. Singh, had written a letter earlier in the day to Mr. Devi Lal describing him as one of the main architects of the Janata Dal who contributed greatly for the success of the party in the elections. As the people have given a clear mandate to the party to work together and if it fails from fulfilling their expectations, people will not excuse the party. Against this background, the prime minister said, he has decided not to accept Mr. Devi Lal's resignation. Mr. V.P. Singh said that all the issues raised by Mr. Devi Lal regarding party and organizational matters can be sorted out in appropriate party fora. The spokesman said that Mr. Devi Lal has agreed not to press for his resignation from the government and accept the spirit, which has been reflected in the letter of the prime minister.

Replying to a question, the spokesman said that no condition has been attached to the withdrawal of the resignation by Mr. Devi Lal. The prime minister in his

letter has given a detailed reply to the points raised by Mr. Devi Lal in his letter to him yesterday.

Finance Minister Presents 1990-91 Proposed Budget

BK1903130890 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Bank loans up to 10,000 rupees are to be written off to provide relief to farmers and artisans. However, wilfull defaulters will not be spared. The finance minister, Professor Madhu Dandavate, announced this while presenting the first budget of the new government in the Lok Sabha a short while ago. He said a scheme is to be introduced for providing debt relief on overdues as of 2 October, including short-term as well as long-term loans from public sectors and regional rural banks. Banks will be compensated with the debts written off.

Professor Dandavate made a number of announcements in his budget speech. The budgetary support for the central plan in the rural sector will go up to 49 percent in the next financial year as against 44 percent in 1989-90. This is in addition to 1,000 crore rupees for debt relief and 4,000 rupees for fertilizer subsidy on the non-planned (?side).

An employment guarantee scheme is to be launched for the drought-prone areas. A new formula has been evolved for computing agricultural prices. The Gold Control Act is to be abolished. A multipronged drive is being launched against proliferation of black money. The industrial licensing policy is to be reviewed and simplified. Facilities to women entrepreneurs will be liberalized.

The finance minister said defense services will have a share of 15,750 crore rupees in the budget estimates. The increase, he said, is the direct result of the situation on the country's borders.

The overall deficit in the central budget will be over 7,200 crore rupees compared to 11,750 crores in the revised estimates of 1989-90. Details of the budget are still coming in.

Now here is a flash: The exemption limit on personal income tax has been raised from 18,000 to 22,000 rupees. As an incentive to savings under 80 CCA [income tax law], the savings limit has been increased to [as heard] 30,000 to 40,000 [rupees].

Here is another flash: The lower rate of income tax of 20 percent will now be applicable up to 30,000 rupees instead of 25,000 at present.

'Highlights of Proposals'

BK1903141990 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1317 GMT 19 Mar 90

["Special budget bulletin"]

[Text] The union budget for 1990-91 has been presented. The highlights of the proposals are:

Personal income tax exemption limit to be raised from 18,000 to 22,000 rupees; eight percent surcharge on higher incomes to continue beyond 75,000 rupees; bank loans to farmers up to 10,000 rupees as on 2 October last year to be waived. The scheme will not be extended or repeated. The Gold Control Act to be abolished. No increase in prices of kerosene and LPG [liquified petroleum gas] cylinders. Motor spirit and high-speed diesel to cost more from midnight tonight. Some life-saving drugs are to become cheaper. Postal stationery are to cost more; postcards spared. Smokers to pay more for filter cigarettes, and pan masala [prepared betel nut] will become dearer. Washing machines, VCR's, and high-price cooking ranges to be costlier. Pickles, rapeseed, and mustard oils and jute fabrics exempted from excise duty. Ice cream to cost more. Dry cell batteries to be cheaper, while motor cars are to be dearer. Two-wheelers and tractors spared excise duty. Import duty on some more bulk pesticides and standard newsprints reduced. Stainless steel articles to be cheaper. Feature films wholly exempted from excise duty. An employment-guarantee scheme to be launched on an experimental basis.

Raising the personal income tax exemption limit to 22,000 rupees, waiving of bank loans to farmers up to 10,000 rupees, abolition of Gold Control Act and employment guarantee scheme in drought-prone and acute rural areas, and concessions to some mass consumption goods are the highlights of the union budget presented in the Lok Sabha a short while ago.

Presenting the National Front government's first budget, the finance minister, Professor Madhu Dandavate, proposed several changes in the rates of direct taxes. Besides raising the income tax exemption limit from 18,000 to 22,000 rupees, he also proposed extension of the lowest rate of 20 percent cut from 25,000 rupees to 30,000 rupees limit. The eight percent surcharge for financing employment programs will now be applicable to the taxable income beyond 75,000 rupees.

Presenting the 7,206-crore-rupee deficit budget, Professor Dandavate said the new government will work for growth with equity and self-reliance. To remove tax anomalies, the finance minister proposed a tax rebate on the gross savings under Section 80C of the Income Tax Act. In an effort to mitigate in some measure the hardship of parents or guardians of the physically handicapped and the mentally retarded with income up to 60,000 rupees a year, Mr. Dandavate has proposed a deduction of 6,000 rupees from their taxable income to enable them to provide better medical treatment.

For small-scale industries, he proposed raising the income tax exemption limit of their owners from 10,000 to 15,000 rupees. A change in the gift tax rate has also been proposed. The present system of tax on donors will

be substituted by a donee-based gift tax. The basic exemption limit of gift tax has been raised to 20,000 rupees.

Mr. Dandavate said top priority will be given to generate employment. An employment guarantee scheme is to be introduced experimentally for the drought-prone and rural areas having acute unemployment. A comprehensive vocational training project will be launched in all states and union territories to improve the quality of craftsman training.

On the agricultural front, the finance minister said an agricultural policy resolution on the line of the industrial policy resolution of 1956 will be formulated. In line with the new government's commitment, 49 percent of the total budgetary outlay has been allocated for agriculture and rural development. Professor Dandavate also announced debt relief for farmers who had taken bank loans up to 10,000 rupees as of 2 October last year. However, the relief will not be extended or repeated. The finance minister said the state governments will be helped in implementing a debt relief scheme on the same pattern as in respect of state cooperative credit institutions. To give new impetus to the agro-based industries, he has proposed exemption of excise duty for rapeseed and mustard oils and pickles.

To boost food processing and seafood industry, the concessional import duty of 40 percent has been extended to some more marine products.

Import duty on some specified bulk pesticides and their intermediaries will also come down from 70 to 60 percent.

Excise duty on coffee will be reduced and will be 50 rupees per quintal uniformly.

To reduce the cost of cattle feed, molasses used in their manufacture has been fully exempted from excise duty. Similarly handmade paper and paper boards manufactured by units of khadi and village industries commissions have been fully spared.

To reduce the prices of some life saving drugs, Professor Dandavate has proposed some excise exemption to bulk drugs required for manufacturing them. Certain life saving equipment will also be fully exempted from import duty. Import duty on homeopathic medicines are also to be reduced.

Highlighting the serious fiscal imbalance in the economy, the finance minister said the government will spare no efforts to managing the deficit by containing the administrative expenditure. Professor Dandavate announced that a multi-pronged drive will be launched to check proliferation of black money. The Economic Intelligence Bureau is being revamped to coordinate the drive against tax evaders and black-money operators. He said the act on benami transactions [transactions made using someone else's name] will be recast so as to make it more difficult for economic offenders to hold benami wealth.

A time-bound scheme will be launched under which undeclared incomes and hidden wealth are to be channeled to social objectives like slum clearance, building of houses for the lower income groups, and setting up agro-based industries in rural and backward areas. However, the government would like to have a thorough debate in Parliament before introducing such a scheme.

The finance minister has also proposed to abolish the Gold Control Act of 1963. At the same time, the Customs Act will be enforced more vigorously to prevent gold smuggling.

It has now become necessary to review the domestic prices of petroleum products. The finance minister said keeping the interest of the common man in mind, he does not propose any increase in prices of kerosene and cooking gas. There will also be no increase in the price of naphtha used for making fertilizers, of natural gas, furnace oil, and low-speed diesel. The prices of motor spirit, high-speed diesel and aviation turbine fuel for domestic uses are, however, being increased from midnight tonight. While the price of motor spirit is being raised by 1 rupee 25 paise per liter ex-storage, that of high-speed diesel will go up by 54 paise per liter.

The finance minister has proposed increase in excise duty on motor cars from the present 35 percent to 40 percent. There will, however, be no change in the excise duty on two-wheelers and tractors.

The duty on dry cell batteries is to come down from 35 to 30 percent.

Excise duty has also been proposed on some luxury goods like microwave ovens, washing machines, VCR's, sophisticated varieties of audio systems, and relatively high priced cooking ranges. The specific excise duty on refrigerators and airconditioners up to 1.5 ton capacity are also being increased. Car airconditioning parts are to attract excise duty of 65 percent as against the existing 40 percent.

Professor Dandavate also proposed excise duty increase on filter cigarettes by 15 paise on the cheaper varieties and by 75 paise on the costlier ones per packet of 10. Filterless cigarettes and beedies [cigar made of tobacco dust and leaves] have, however, been spared. He said some sympathetic increase of excise duty has been proposed for pan masala. For the first time, ice cream will attract 10 percent excise duty.

The finance minister also announced higher tariff for some postal stationery. Presenting proposals in this regard on behalf of the union communications minister, Professor Dandavate said the rate of printed post card will go up from 40 paise to 60 paise. In the interest of the common man, there will be no increase in the tariff of ordinary post cards and registered newspapers.

Proposals 'Signal for Austerity'

BK1903161790 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Excerpts] Raising the personal income tax exemption limit to 22,000 rupees, waiving of bank loans to farmers up to 10,000 rupees, abolition of the Gold Control Act, an employment guarantee scheme in drought-prone and acute rural areas, and concessions to some mass consumption goods are the highlights of the union budget presented in the Lok Sabha this evening. Presenting the National Front government's first budget, the finance minister, Professor Madhu Dandavate, proposed amidst loud cheers raising of the income tax exemption limit from 18,000 to 22,000 rupees. [passage omitted]

Later, speaking to our correspondent, Parmesh Kashyap, the finance minister said that the budget proposals aim at checking the price rise, which was the main commitment of the government. He said that prices can be stabilized in the long run only by restricting the budget deficit. This has been done. The budget puts more burden on the rich to mobilize the resources for the development and welfare of the poor. Professor Dandavate told our correspondent that his proposals like the gift donation tax is a signal for austerity and will keep a check on fictitious donations.

'Bitter Pills' for Middle Class

BK1903150890 Hong Kong AFP in English 1459 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] New Delhi, March 19 (AFP)—India's new government unveiled its maiden budget in Parliament Monday stinging the urban rich and middle class with steep taxes on luxury goods but boosting rural expenditure by a massive 31 per cent. The budget for the fiscal year starting April 1 presented by Finance Minister Madhu Dandavate also provided a major boost for export oriented industries, on which the government is relying to pull India out of its growing foreign debt problems.

Mr. Dandavate also promised restructuring in corporate taxation which he said would provide the government with 1.15 billion dollars in new tax revenue bringing the projected balance of payments deficit to 4.24 billion dollars.

The budget envisaged expenditure of 55.6 billion dollars with a hefty 18 per cent going to defence, and revenues of 51.3 billion dollar. Defence spending rose by 660 million dollars from last year to 9.2 billion dollars, with Mr. Dandavate saying the hike was unavoidable because of India's border problems, an obvious reference to tensions between New Delhi and Islamabad.

For farmers the news was sweet, with a hefty 588 million dollars provided in straight debt relief on farm loans, while fertilizer subsidies chewed up a massive 2.35 billion dollars.

But for the urban upper middle classes, in a country of some 850 million people with an average annual income of less than 150 dollars, the budget was nothing but a fistful of bitter pills. Unaffected by the raising of the tax ceiling from just over 1,000 dollars to 1,300 dollars, the urban rich must now pay up to 40 per cent higher taxes on cigarettes, fuel, cars, video recorders, washing machines, air conditioners and refrigerators.

Mr. Dandavate also warned that his government would be introducing tough new laws to track down "black money" or undeclared income. The move, which Mr. Dandavate said would rake in at least 470 million dollars, had been widely forecast because of the track record of Prime Minister Vishwanath Pratap Singh, who as finance minister in the previous government had launched what was seen as a witch hunt against black money hoarders. The twin policy would involve closing escape routes for big-time tax evaders who often launder unaccounted wealth through gifts, while liberalizing foreign exchange and small company laws.

He also proposed the abolition of the 1963 Gold Control Act which prohibited gold imports and hoarding and which Mr. Dandavate said had been a failure because of massive smuggling.

The other main feature of the budget was substantial hikes on gasoline and diesel fuel designed to cut India's huge petroleum import bills and which were expected to hit consumers across the board.

Commenting on the budget, the prime minister said the "hard measures" were designed to prevent India from falling into the "foreign debt trap and retain our economic independence." India's foreign exhange reserves, minus gold and special drawing rights (SDR's), now stand at 2.94 billion dollars and its foreign debt repayments are expected to rise to some 1.2 billion dollars from 1.08 billion dollars.

Budget Draws Mixed Reaction

BK2003034990 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 20 Mar 90

[Text] The National Front government's first general budget presented to parliament yesterday has evoked mixed reactions. The hike in prices of petrol, diesel, and postal articles have been generally criticized, while the rural thrust in the proposals, particularly those related to debt relief, have been lauded.

Reacting to the budget proposals, the Orissa chief minister, Mr. Biju Patnaik, and the Uttar Pradesh chief minister, Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav, have described it as an exceedingly beneficial and encouraging one for the development of rural areas.

The Madhya Pradesh chief minister, Mr. Sunderlal Patwa, described it as a revolutionary attempt which gives a new orientation to the economy of the country.

However, the leader of the opposition in the state assembly, Mr. Shyama Charan Shukla, termed it as anti-farmers.

The West Bengal chief minister, Mr. Jyoti Basu, while hailing the proposal, said that to raise excise duty on commodities used by the upper income group and the reduction on this duty on items of mass consumption are most welcomed.

The Karnataka chief minister, Mr. Virendra Patil, expressed disappointment over the scheme of debt relief, pointing out that it is made applicable only to loans from the public sector banks and rural banks and not to cooperative societies from where the most farm loans were taken.

The former prime minister, Mr. Morarji Desai, has also welcomed the proposals of abolishing the Gold Control Act which he had introduced in 1963.

The CPI [Communist Party of India] leader, Mr. Indrajit Gupta, has termed the budget as a balanced one, while the Congress-I MP [member of parliament], Mr. M.J.Akbar, described it as a heartless bureaucrat report.

The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leader, Mr. L.K.Advani, said though the budget contains some positive features, yet he had the overall feeling of having been let down. He said the income tax limits should have been enhanced to at least 30,000 rupees. Mr. Somnath Chatterjee of the CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] said that the hike in petroleum and postal rates would hit the people hard.

The former union ministers Mr. Madhavrao Scindia and Mr. Janardhana Poojary have termed the budget as very short-sighted and antipeople, while the Muslim League leader, Mr. G.M. Banathwala, described it not as hard as feared. The general secretary of All India Forward Bloc, Mr. Chitta Basu, said that the budget proposals do not signify any radical change in the fiscal and economic policies.

Reactions on the budget proposals from various chambers of trade and industry have also come in. The president of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Mr. Raunaq Singh, said that the finance minister has shown extreme ingenuity by reducing the deficit from 11,750 crore rupees. A noted industrialist, Mr. Ramakrishna Bajaj, has called the budget short of expectation. However, eminent economist Dr. Malcolm Adiseshaya has welcomed the higher outlay on agriculture and rural development and introduction of the employment guarantee scheme. The Indian National Trade Union Congress president, Mr. G. Ramanujam, described the budget as relief oriented. The All-India Motor Transport Congress has criticized the hike in prices on diesel and tires, and the former deputy chairman of the Planning Commission, Mr. Lakadawala, welcomed the efforts to curtail deficit, plan and nonplan expenditure, and greater allocation of resources for rural areas, and employment generation schemes.

The Bombay Stock Exchange president, Mr. G.B.Desai, has complimented the finance minister for presenting an excellent budget.

The prime minister, Mr. Vishwanath Pratap Singh, said that the new budget would help the country to retain its economic independence. He said we do not want to fall into the debt trap and would like to retain our economic independence. In view of this, he said, certain hard measures have to be taken as there are many constraints in which we are working.

Professor Madhu Dandavate said that the budget proposals are aimed at checking the price rise, which was the main commitment of the government. He said the prices will be stabilized in the long run by restricting the budget deficit and this, he said, has been done.

V.P. Singh Leaves To Attend Namibia Celebrations

BK2003092090 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 20 Mar 90

[Text] The prime minister, Mr. Vishwanath Pratap Singh, left New Delhi for Windhoek a short while ago to participate in the independence celebrations of Namibia. He is accompanied by an eight-member delegation.

Talking to newsmen at Delhi airport before his departure, the prime minister expressed happiness that his first visit is to a developing country which is getting independence. He said this is a happy occasion not only for Namibia but for India as well, as India has been an active supporter and campaigner for Namibia's independence.

The prime minister was seen off at the airport by the deputy prime minister, Mr. Devi Lal, and a number of his other cabinet colleagues.

Iran

Majles Deputies Issue Statement on Hostages

NC2003055390 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 20 Mar 90

[Text] More than 170 Majles deputies have issued a statement in which reference is made to reports by some of arrogance's mass media on the possible death of four Iranian [as heard] diplomats being held hostage in Lebanon. The deputies stated that the United States and its elements are to blame for anything that befalls these hostages.

The statement, which was read during last night's Majles session, says: The fate of the Western hostages in Lebanon depends on what the Muslim people of Lebanon want—an end to the U.S. plots in Lebanon and the clarification of the fate of the Lebanese and Palestinian

hostages in prisons in the West. The arrogant mass media's propaganda on separating the fate of the Western hostages from the problems of Lebanon is strongly condemned.

The statement calls on Foreign Ministry officials to adopt a clear stand in answer to the recent propaganda and the rumors on Iran's secret talks on the Western hostages, and to confirm that, contrary to this propaganda, Iran was not involved in the issue of the Western hostages.

The Foreign Ministry has also been asked to decisively follow up the fate of the Iranian hostages in Lebanon and to take serious steps to save them.

U.S. Involvement in al-Rabitah Fire Alleged

NC1903205490 Tehran International Service in Arabic 1730 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Political commentary]

[Excerpts] A Libyan Foreign Ministry spokesman has stated that the fire at the al-Rabitah pharmaceutical plant was an act of sabotage. He added that the espionage organs of countries famous for carrying out state terrorism were responsible for this crime. The Libyan official did not name a specific country. He said, however, that colonialist countries, notably the United States and the Zionist entity, are trying to prevent the Arab countries from acquiring sophisticated technology and modern methods of producing medicines.

Washington and Tel Aviv denied any involvement in the al-Rabitah fire. The facts refute this. The United States was the first country to announce the news of the fire's occurrence last Wednesday. [passage omitted]

It is clear that the recent improvement in Libyan-French relations and the development of Libyan ties with its neighbors have not had a positive effect on Libya's ties with the United States and West Germany. In light of the escalating accusations Washington and Bonn leveled against Libya, charging that it was producing chemical weapons, al-Qadhdhafi hastened to announce that Libya was willing to accept a visit by a neutral investigating commission to ascertain what the al-Rabitah factory was producing.

Weeks ago, disagreements reached a climax in light of the escalating media campaigns against Libya. The United States renewed economic sanctions against Libya, and West Germany detained a civilian Libyan plane at Frankfurt. George Bush justified the decision to extend economic sanctions by saying that the Libyan Government's policies and acts pose a serious threat to U.S. national security and its foreign policy. Hence, in light of these successive developments, it becomes clear that U.S. and allied hands were behind the acts of sabotage at the al-Rabitah industrial complex in Libya. It is also clear that improving relations with the arrogant West does not prevent it from continuing its hostile acts of sabotage against small countries. The West accepts nothing except total subservience to its policies of plunder and unlimited greed.

Yazdi's Remarks on 'Economic Terrorists'

LD1603121190 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 16 Mar 90

[Text] In a questions and answers meeting held by the clerics of Qom religious seminary Ayatollah Yazdi, head of the Judiciary, said: If the Islamic Consultative Assembly gives us the approval, the judicial system will deal with economic terrorists by executing them. He added: The judicial system will deal decisively with those who cause disruption in the country's economic affairs, even if they are in government departments, and from now on it will deal with them with greater severity.

Referring to measures taken against the improper observance of Islamic dress for women [hijab] and the struggle against forbidden practices [monkarat—the use of alcohol and other stimulants], Ayatollah Yazdi said: It is the duty of the revolutionary courts to deal with such cases. On the basis of existing laws, they use various methods and deal severely with those who do not observe Islamic appearance and Islamic injunctions.

Regarding the setting up of a committee in the Judiciary to deal with international affairs, the head of the Judiciary said: This committee, whose members are well-versed in Islamic and international laws, is tasked with introducing the Islamic judicial system to the judicial circles of the world.

During this meeting, Mohammad Hashemi, head of the Voice and Vision Organization of Iran, and Hojjat ol-Eslam Do'agu, head of the policy-making council of the Voice of Vision, answered the clerics' questions about radio and television programs.

Majles Ratifies National Budget Bill 19 Mar

NC2003081390 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 20 Mar 90

[Text] The details of the national budget for 1369 [21 March 1990-20 March 1991] have been ratified by the Majles deputies. During the session held at 2000 last night under the chairmanship of Mr. Karrubi, the notes to the budget bill revised by the Council of Guardians were studied, and its amendments were ratified by the deputies.

On the basis of the amended single article, revenues and other credit sources for the 1369 budget amount to 13,000,156,288,651 rials, which is equal to the expenditures and other projected payments in the year in question. On the basis of the aforesaid single article, the government's general budget—as far as revenues and other credit sources, expenditures, and other payments are concerned—is 6,000,191,969,142 rials.

At the end of last night's open session of the Majles, Speaker Karrubi announced that the budget bill approved by the Majles will be sent to the Council of Guardians once again for the council's views, and that if the Council of Guardians objects to the Majles' ratification, the bill will be sent to the Expediency Discernment Council. He then praised the Majles deputies, especially the members of the Majles budget and planning committee, the Plan and Budget Organization, and the Council of Guardians, for their efforts. In conclusion, the Majles speaker congratulated the lofty leadership and the Iranian nation on the new year 1369, and expressed hopes that it will be the year of the country's reconstruction and of the continuation of the dynamic path of his eminence the imam, may his grave be sanctified.

The last open session of the Majles ended at 2200 last night. The first session in the new year will be held on 4 April.

*Government Reportedly Seeking Loans Abroad

90OI0180C London KEYHAN in Persian 22 Feb 90 p 4

[Text] At present, Japan, with a daily purchase of about 300,000 barrels of crude oil from the Islamic Republic, has changed Iran into one of the greatest suppliers of its crude oil needs, after the United Arab Emirates, Indonesia, and Saudi Arabia.

In addition to the above-mentioned 300,000 barrels of crude oil, Japan through one of its more reputable oil and industrial firms named Mitsubi, during the last two months has pre-purchased about $300 million of Iranian crude oil as well.

According to some reports from Japan, at the present time the Islamic Republic, in dire need of attracting foreign capital and allowing the partnership of some international companies in the industrial affairs of the country, has moved ever so much closer to Japan and intends, in addition to preparing the preliminary details for obtaining loans from the banks and other financial institutions of that country, to further expand its commercial and industrial relations with the Japanese firms. In pursuit of this policy, at the beginning of the current month of February the National Iranian Oil Company sent a delegation composed of directors of various units of the Ministry of Petroleum to Japan in order to conduct negotiations and attract the partnership of that country in the projects of Iran's oil company. Majid Hedayatzadeh, the deputy minister of petroleum in international affairs, was at the head of that delegation and after a few days stay in Japan the aforestated delegation left for South Korea.

The economic weekly MEED [Middle East Economic Digest] of London, in this regard wrote: It is expected that a few economic delegations from the Japanese Economic Units Federation will be dispatched to the Islamic Republic of Iran. The aforesaid weekly further revealed that an industrial Japanese company called Toyomenka (Nippon Steel) has also been successful in securing the contract for the reconstruction of Soleyman offshore oil wells. The value of the above-mentioned contract is estimated to be about $250 million to $300 million.

A knowledgeable source told KEYHAN's correspondent that the Islamic regime of Tehran, along with the expansion of its commercial ties and industrial cooperation with Japan and the Federal Republic of Germany, is also intensively engaged in securing a portion of its financial needs through borrowing on credit, and various other available commercial means of medium or long-term loans plus drawing up new industrial and production "buy-back" contracts. Apparently, the activities of 'Adeli, the present director of the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic and the Islmic regime's former ambassador to Tokyo, so far had not produced the expected result in attracting the attention of Japanese banking and financial institutions. And during the last three weeks, various economic delegations have been secretly dispatched to Tokyo so as to continue their behind the scenes efforts for securing loans from Japan.

The economic London weekly MEED in its latest issue has revealed the efforts of the Islamic Republic to obtain loans from foreign sources and while quoting Morteza Alviri, president of the Majles Plan and Budget Commission, it wrote that in order to secure its financial needs for the construction of four dams, the Islamic Republic might ask for a loan from the IMF. The above-stated weekly, while announcing the fact that the statements made by Alviri are contrary to those denied by Mohammad Hoseyn 'Adeli, president of the Central Bank, with regard to talks with IMF officials, also wrote: "The Islamic Republic intends to borrow $27 billion during the course of the five-year development plan from foreign sources and spend the same on the execution of development projects." MEED further added: "According to Morteza Alviri, about $3 billion of the aforementioned loan will be spent on the construction of four dams in various parts of the country. Also about $9 billion will be spent on industrial projects and $15 billion will be disbursed on the execution of those projects where part of the final products will be used toward amortization of the loans."

*Foreign Partners' Holdings in Companies Increased

90OI0180D London KEYHAN in Persian 22 Feb 90 p 4

[Text] The Islamic Republic's Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance has announced that the foreign investors and non-Iranian partners of the companies formed in Iran can possess 49 percent of the shares in the companies thus formed. This news, which was relayed to the representatives of the mass media by Mehdi Navab, the Islamic Republic's deputy minister of economic affairs and finance, during a visit by an economic delegation from the Federal Republic of Germany, caused great surprise among the economic observers and analysts of Iran's political affairs.

The news regarding an increase in foreign investors' holdings to the tune of 49 percent of the shares of the Iranian companies is announced at a time when the Islamic regime of Tehran, in its continual slogans, emphasizes discontinuation of the hands of the foreigners in the economic affairs of the country. Before the advent of the revolution, foreign companies and international investors, according to the customary rules, were not allowed to possess more than 35 percent of the shares of the companies which were formed in Iran.

The London economic weekly MEED [Middle East Economic Digest] in this regard wrote: "The subject of foreign partnership in the economic projects of Iran has always been faced with a particular political sensitivity." The aforementioned weekly further added: "Although during recent years the Tehran regime has approved certain cases of foreign partnership with regard to economic projects. Nevertheless, the responsible authorities have never openly announced the details of their policies in this area."

In another part of its report, MEED wrote: "The permission for possession of 49 percent of the shares of the companies by foreign investors goes well beyond the limit of 35 percent allowable before the advent of the Islamic revolution. This recent decision of the Islamic regime has greatly surprised many economic observers."

MEED also pointed out that the new arrangements approved by the officials of the Islmic Republic's Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance and the Central Bank with regard to the permissibility of foreign partnership in the economic companies might be limited to a few export projects such as oil, gas, and other petrochemical projects.

The aforementioned economic journal also added: "The most important projects which are presently attracting foreign investors and the Islamic regime is also intent on their execution are: Utilization project of Pars gas wells located in the southern region of the Persian Gulf, some unspecific petrochemical projects, and certain projects for the construction of paper manufacturing plants."

MEED further wrote: "The Islamic Consultative Majles, in the current year's budget of the country, has allowed $3.2 billion of foreign investment for the expansion of Pars gas resources and $2.2 billion for some petrochemical projects and a few other industrial ones."

According to a report from Tehran, the responsible authorities of the Islamic regime's Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance in Tehran and the Central Bank have recently decided to guarantee repayment of the foreign loans. Thus, the Islamic Republic not only has been making every effort to secure loans from foreign sources, it has also tried to encourage other banks, financial institutions, and foreign companies to extend loans to the Islamic Republic through a guarantee of the repayment of the loans by the Central Bank of Iran.

Economic observers believe that the Tehran regime, as a result of encountering abundant economic problems and particularly the lack of progress with regard to the reconstruction of the devastated areas resulting from eight years of war with Iraq, is intent during recent years to pretend the plausibility of the five-year plan and thus obtain foreign loans to the tune of $30 billion. An analyst of the economic and political affairs of Iran told KEYHAN's correspondent that apparently neither the international financial institutions nor the foreign banks are ready to extend loans to the Islamic Republic nor are some of the hardliners of the regime showing any leniency towards borrowing at all.

On the other hand, so far the responsible officials of the regime, in their hollow and deceptive slogan, have continually stated their independence from any foreign financial sources, and on many occasions they have promised never to borrow from foreigners. Therefore, the leaders of this bankrupt regime, through the execution of precise publicity programs and utilization of every possibility at their disposal, are trying to do their best to prepare the general public for leading the country into debt and at the same time prevent the opposition of certain clerics as well.

Concerning this point, some time ago Hojjat ol-Eslam Sa'idian, a representative of the Islamic Consultative Majles told reporters: "Borrowing from foreign sources when it does not create long-term debts seems admissible."

The above-stated individual, who is also a member of the Majles Finance Committee, reiterated the admissibility of borrowing in certain instances; however in other projects such as the construction of a dam which does not have a good chance of quick return, borrowing does not seem to be correct at all.

*Paper on Government's Advance Crude Oil Sale

90OI0180F London KEYHAN in Persian 22 Feb 90 p 4

[Text] Following the policy of advance crude oil sales of Iran by the Islamic Republic, the international energy sources have revealed that the Ministry of Petroleum of the Islamic regime of Tehran, through intercession of some international oil companies, has sold an equivalent of another $700 million of Iranian crude oil in the form of advance sale.

Taking into consideration the above-mentioned figure, so far the Islamic Republic has sold an equivalent of $1.5 billion of Iranian crude oil in the form of advance sale for one year, and until now it has received part of the interest-bearing payment as well.

The international oil and energy sources have mentioned the name of "Mark Rich," a firm established in Switzerland, as one of the companies which has succeeded in paying $400 million to the Islamic Republic in payment for the oil to be delivered in the next 12 months. The aforementioned company, in lieu to the payment of the

above-stated sum, will receive one-half percent annual interest from the Islamic Republic. The necessary arrangements for this financial transaction was carried out by the Interbank Financial Institute of London.

In addition to the "Mark Rich" company, two Japanese firms—whose names have not been revealed—have also taken steps in signing agreements for the advance purchase of oil from the Islamic Republic. The value of each agreement by the two Japanese firms has been cited to be about $150 million. Also last October the National Iranian Oil Company signed a $600 million agreement with four other Japanese commercial firms, thus selling in advance another part of the national wealth of Iran.

The London economic weekly MEED [Middle East Economic Digest], with regard to the presale activities of Iranian crude oil by the Islamic regime of Tehran, wrote: "The Islamic Republic signed its largest presale agreement of Iranian crude oil last November with a German firm called Marimpeks—which is controlled by the French. The value of this last agreement stands at $800 million and the sum of $100 million of the aforestated figure which had been secured by 13 European and American banks has been paid back by the National Iranian Oil Company." MEED further added: "Repayment of the advance sale money should be carried out within 12 months by monthly installments."

In another part of its report, MEED noted that as of the end of 1988 the National Iranian Oil Company has resorted to the policy of advance sale of Iranian crude oil, and until now about 15 percent of the total oil export of Iran has been delivered to the buyers in this form. The aforementioned journal further added: "The total amount for advance sale of Iranian crude oil reaches about $1.5 billion annually, and there is the possibility that the oil officials of the Islamic Republic might increase that figure to $2 billion."

Mohtashemi Interviewed on World Power Balance

PM1603163490 Tehran KEYHAN HAVA'I in Persian 7 Mar 90 p 15

[Interview with Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Mohtashemi, former minister of interior, by KEYHAN HAVA'I; place and date not given]

[Text] You have read the major interview we conducted with Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Mohtashemi for our revolution anniversary supplement. Despite the fact that our original interview time ran over, there were still some questions left unanswered. It was decided that he write the replies to them in a letter. What you see now are the replies to those remaining questions for which there was no time in the main interview.

[KEYHAN HAVA'I] Following the recent events in Eastern Europe and the failure of revolutionary movements in many Third World countries, there are some who now believe that one should put aside the "no compromise" attitude toward world powers. This group believes that action should be taken within the framework of the existing system which would enable a nation to achieve growth, expansion and freedom—like Korea. Can one believe the logic behind this thought? Can one accept these proposals?

[Mohtashemi] I believe that first of all the Eastern bloc, like the Western bloc, has had severe deviations and has been unstable from the beginning, both in terms of their economy and also in terms of their economic programs. The second issue is that we do not consider the system ruling the East bloc as revolutionary. We consider it to be inhumane just like the corrupt Western system of capitalism. So the defeat of the Eastern bloc in thought, ideology and regimes, does not mean the defeat of revolutionary principles or thoughts and does not mean the defeat of revolutionary movements in the Third World

The third issue is that in the Third World there have been revolutionary movements that have been defeated and this was because they abandoned their revolutionary principles. The most perfect example of this is the PLO. There was a time when all liberation movemens in the Third World really respected the PLO. But this movement has been in decline since the time it forgot its revolutionary principles, when it started to engage in political activity and negotiations, ultimately resulting in compromise. Today the world has witnessed the ultimate defeat of the Palestinian revolution within the PLO leadership, however the Islamic revolution in the occupied territories has filled the void left by the PLO leadership. In general any revolution that departs from its revolutionary principles and stops trying to expand and export them is doomed to failure.

I must also mention one thing and that is that the defeat of the Eastern bloc and the Soviet Union does not mean victory for the West. The corrupt, materialistic and capitalistic system of the West and the United States was defeated a long time before communism and socialism failed. The American superpower will sooner or later suffer the same fate as the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc. The world will then see and celebrate the fall of the monster of a system that is ruling the United States, which is so corrupt and disgusting.

The events in the Eastern bloc are happening at a time when Islam is growing and expanding every day. I believe that an offensive by pure Islam, undertaken by the forces of the Islamic resistance against the devilish system ruling the world would bring about the downfall of the empty rule of the United States and as a result will speed up the rule of pure Islam. In other words, instead of thinking toward peaceful co-existance in the current corrupt regime in the world—which ultimately means accepting the policies of the devilish regime with all its cruel rules aimed at enslaving all humanity and all Muslims—one must think along the lines of breaking its fragile walls. This is the path that has been chosen by the children of the imam all over the world. Either we will

achieve total victory or else we will be martyred. If we are martyred, then the enemy will respect pure revolutionary Islam.

In connection with the last part of your question I must say that the devilish system ruling the world will never allow Iran and other Third World countries to grow, expand or be free. Today South Korea is a puppet of the United States. Its people are politically, economically and industrially dependent. In reality the people of Korea are witnesses to the growth of dependence and the immoral culture of the West and the United States which destroys homes and families. They are not witnessing independence and human freedom.

[KEYHAN HAVA'I] The Islamic revolution follows two sets of goals, one national and the other outside its borders, ideological. It is quite normal that sometimes these two would contadict one another. How can one ensure a mechanism to achieve both internal economic growth as well aa other goals such as exporting the revolution?

[Mohtashemi] There is no contradiction between national and ideological interests. As a whole the term "outside interests" is a deviant thought as far as Islamic principles and the Islamic revolution are concerned, because Islam is an ideology that has set out to free the human race. Islam is the founder of a system that guarantees independence, freedom and territorial integrity throughout the Islamic world. It seeks social justice. A revolutionary Islamic system rejects any cruel control by foreign or internal powers or money hoarders and mercenaries. All these principles are not only Islamic but are also part of the national basis of Islamic countries as well.

Economic growth within the framework of Islamic finance does not contradict in any way our national goals. Unfortunately when one talks about economic growth, some people think of this along the lines of Western capitalism or economics along the lines of Eastern socialism. Of course if we talk about economic growth in terms of the imported economy of the West, or the East, such growth would be both against our national interests as well as our ideological interests. It destroys both our national and Islamic interests at the same time. I say clearly and openly that if the impossible happens and there is a contradiction between our national and our Islamic revolutionary goals, it will have to be our national interests that are sacrificed for the revolution, not the other w ay around.

Unfortunately the aggressive world has tried to promote economic issues as primary concerns and cultural and political issues as peripheral issues—things that can change. Our imam—may God expedite his passage to paradise—said quite correctly: Our people did not stage the revolution to obtain bread. This means that the people staged the revolution in order to gain independence and freedom, and to reject the control of the East and West.

If in the Islamic Republic, economic growth within a capitalist framework becomes the primary factor, with political independence and Islamic culture coming next in line in priority, the Islamic revolution will be in real danger of collapse. Political independence, Islamic culture and the revolution's principles are the elements that will not change. Economic matters, social issues, local and foreign communciations and management methods are executive matters that are the leaves and branches of the revolution and its principles and they must be flexible.

According to the sayings of the imam, the people may tolerate hunger and hardship, but they will never accept control, cruelty and dependence.

The way to resolve our economic problems and achieve growth within the framework of our Islamic revolution is for us to use our own resources as much as possible and to end our dependence on foreign countries. This is the direction the regime must follow in the first stage, to expand agriculture and related industries as well as handicrafts and other national industries. Then we must seek the technology for essential industries, not assembly industries. The latter kind of industries were traps that the United States and the West set for us before the revolution in order to make us dependent. Those types of industries have made Iran dependent, have destroyed agriculture, villages and farms. The net result is that we are more dependent than ever both in agriculture and in assembly industries for which we are still dependent on the West.

With regard to exporting the revolution, I must say that this is not something that is under our control. One of the special aspects of the brilliant Islamic revolution is that it is aimed at liberating people and giving them dignity. It opens its own way in human society, all by itself. It has no limits and recognizes no boundaries. Not only the enemy, but even the leaders and supporters of this revolution will be unable to oppose its exportation, as long as its principles remain intact.

[KEYHAN HAVA'I] The aforementioned contradition in national interests comes to light in a different way, and that is the contradiction between growth and expansion and social justice. Growth requires granting some scope to the private sector, and social justice requires that the private sector be limited to a large extent. Do you regard the recent economic policies—especially those mapped out in the Five-Year Plan—as designed to achieve both these goals?

[Mohtashemi] This question is a different way of asking the previous one. In other words, economic growth in the country is a matter of national interest which requires the involvement of the private sector's investments. Social justice is one of the goals of the Islamic revolution which seeks to limit capitalism.

At this time the question raises many subjects that could be discussed. Economic expansion and growth can be

considered both in the national interest and an ideological asset in a way that would not conflict with social justice in any way.

Economic growth can take place for everyone. The government can create jobs by giving facilities to the cooperatives for industrial production, mining and agriculture. The executive authorities can support and strengthen new cooperatives within the framework of the Constitution. This can be done in a such a way that the private sector can be active and busy like the rest of the people. Thus the country would naturally enjoy economic growth and at the same time provide social justice as well.

But if the nation's facilities are directed toward encouraging private sector investment, it will cause investors to become wealthier and the majority of the people, workers, farmers, and civil servants to become poorer. That would be a situation where economic growth would conflict with social justice. I believe this would neither serve our national interests; nor is it in line with social justice or the revolution's principles.

In the new economic policies and the Five-Year Plan, the parts that direct the country's resources toward the interests of the people realize both these goals, while the parts directed toward the interests of only one sector of society achieve neither national nor revolutionary goals.

[KEYHAN HAVA'I] Some believe that with the removal from world politics of the Soviet Union as a major power, the world will move toward the United States. What is your view on this?

[Mohtashemi] Current events show that—contrary to the views of some analysts with arid and pointless ideas and some U.S. leaders who believe that the world is no longer divided into two blocs, that it is moving toward the American bloc—the world in the future will have several powerful blocs. The Islamic power will play a decisive role in this.

Today we have seen the collapse of communism in the Eastern bloc and the Soviet Union. The Eastern European countries have become free, one after another. The Soviet republics want freedom from dictatorial communist rule. The United States will also be forced to leave Western Europe in the future to cope with the internal contradictions that it is facing.

It is under such conditions—when the superpowers have their internal issues and problems—that the people of the Third World, especially in the Islamic countries, will, within the next decade, become free of the control of foreign powers and their mercenaries and will be liberated. So the world is becoming multi-polar. Ultimately Islam will become the supreme power and will play a decisive role on the international scene.

Mohtashemi Interviewed on Peace Talks

LD1903232290 Tehran IRNA in English 1619 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Tehran, March 19, IRNA—Majles Deputy Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Mohtashemi has said that the deadlocked peace talks with Ba'thist Iraq takes only a militarily stronger Islamic Iran to resolve.

The former interior minister's interview appeared today afternoon [as received] in the Persian daily ETTE-LA'AT, where he spoke on the U.N. Security Council Resolution 598 which seeks to end the Iraqi conflict, and on relations with the United States of America.

"With the enemy unwilling to execute the U.N. resolution, and the world powers not allowing the Iraqi regime to fulfill its commitments to international conventions," said Mohtashemi, "we need to rely on two things...first on our power at home the secret to which lies in the words of Imam Khomeyni and in his plan for the formation of the 20-million strong army.

"Secondly" he added, "on our potential power abroad. We have a potentially big power in other countries, in the Muslim states and even in Europe and the U.S. our resources are the Muslims who are with the Islamic revolution. Our enemies are panicked at our power abroad and at the presence of the Islamic revolution in other lands."

"To break the deadlocked talks would not be possible within the framework of the UN Security Concil Resolution 598 or by means of direct or indirect talks nor by resorting to diplomatic and political maneuvers," thought the hojjat ol-Eslam "but rather only within the framework of our military and defence capabilities in and outside Iran."

He said that "some maintain a third theory to solve the issue, recommending some degree of leniency towards Washington."

Outside Iran." [incomplete sentence as received]

According to the former home minister, "advocates of this theory believe that once the Islamic Republic should bring itself within the framework of the so-called international regulations then the superpowers will compel the Iraqi regime to implement Resolution 598, which judgment is simply an unrealistic optimism..."

It was his firm conviction that the U.S. insists on resuming relations with Iran "simply in a bid to defeat the resolve of the Islamic revolution and of the people of Iran before the eyes of the world people..."

Warned the parliament deputy, "Should Washington succeed in deceiving Tehran into resuming ties with her by increasing pressures and by its propaganda barrage against the Islamic Republic as well as by political maneuvers then it means that it has defeated the ideology of the Islamic revolution in Iran and among other world nations..."

*Azari-Qomi Talk Draws Harsh Criticism

90OI0211B London KEYHAN in Persian 8 Mar 90 pp 1, 11

[Text] In Tehran harsh propaganda attacks have begun against Ayatollah Azari-Qomi. These attacks came in the wake of a talk he gave for the Friday prayer at Tehran University, before giving the Friday prayers sermon, in which he questioned the continued validity of Ayatollah Khomeyni's decrees.

Ayatollah Azari-Qomi, who is a member of the Council of Guardians, was apparently speaking in defense of absolute velayat-e faqih [vice-regency of the supreme jurisconsult] and in support of Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, criticizing those from the Qom Seminary who reject Khamene'i's qualifications as a source of emulation and religious leader, and do not think him competent as religious leader of the Muslims.

In addition to his talk that day, Ayatollah Azari-Qomi wrote an article published in RESALAT in which he defended absolute velayat-e faqih and said that Khamene'i is the vali-ye faqih [guardian of the supreme jurisconsult] and has absolute velayat-e faqih and that the line of "Imam Khomeyni" and his thoughts and words, since he has gone from this world, cannot continue to be regarded as the unwavering principles of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and that instead of the thoughts and commands of Khomeyni, the thoughts and commands of the "living vali-ye faqih", meaning Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, must prevail in the Islamic society.

Ayatollah Azari-Qomi emphasized that the conditions of time and place must be considered concerning the commands issued by the vali-ye faqih, and since the conditions of time and place are now different than they were during the life of Khomeyni, new commands must be issued by the "living vali-ye faqih" for society that comport with the circumstances of the day.

In this regard, Ayatollah Azari-Qomi asked: "Do exactly the same conditions exist after the great one's passing?"

He emphasized that even Khomeyni himself, during his lifetime, changed his decrees and commands in accordance with the needs of the time, and therefore after his death the vali-ye faqih must revise his commands and ideas.

The attack by the regime's hard-liners on Ayatollah Azari-Qomi began on 27 February when Majles Speaker Mehdi Karrubi harshly attacked him and his supporters.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Assadollah Bayat, the Zanjan representative and deputy speaker of the Majles, also attacked Ayatollah Azari-Qomi in harsh terms, saying that he has taken a stance in opposition to the imam's line and in support of the capitalists. Assadollah Bayat accused Ayatollah Azari-Qomi of opposing the commands of the "imam" even during the lifetime of Ayatollah Khomeyni. As an example of Ayatollah Azari-Qomi's opposition, he cited his opposition to Mir Hoseyn Musavi's becoming prime minister again. He said: "Ayatollah Azari-Qomi divided the commands of the imam into two groups, guidance and directives, and said that in this regard the views of the imam constitute guidance, and it is not necessary to obey them."

Bayat implied that Ayatollah Azari-Qomi is an enemy of Khomeyni, and said:

"While the imam was alive they had great rancor and thought that after his life was over they would be able to achieve their satanic aspirations. They are planning to announce that the age of Khomeyni is over."

'Isa Vela'i, the representative of Tehran in the Islamic Consultative Majles, also accused Ayatollah Azari-Qomi and his supporters of demonstrating in favor of Khamene'i, while in practice their aim is to reject the ideas of Khomeyni.

Vela'i asked: "By clinging to the current leadership, aren't you trying to put aside the prophet of this revolution?"

The newspaper KEYHAN (Tehran) also published harsh articles against Ayatollah Azari-Qomi, and accused him of actually being opposed to velayat-e faqih, and said that while he pretends to support Khamene'i, his real aim is to sow discord among the regime's leaders.

KEYHAN threatened Ayatollah Azari-Qomi that if he continues making deviated statements it will "expose him and reveal his past."

The differences that have now appeared among Iran's ruling clergy are among the most serious ones to emerge in recent years.

Editorial on Azari-Qomi Controversy

NC1903223090 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 3 Mar 90 pp 1, 10

[Editorial: "Public Obligation"]

[Text] In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. The dossier which was opened with a presermon speech to last Friday's [23 February] congregation at Tehran, which monopolized the time of the most active forces of the revolution, was on the point of metamorphosing into another problem for society. Praise be to God, this dossier was closed with the enlightening address by the honorable leader of the Islamic revolution, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, in his address to the gathering of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps on the auspicious day of 28 February.

The presermon speech at the Tehran Friday prayers generated a wave of objections in its wake, and it caused apprehension that certain hands are at work which wish to relegate the imam's line to oblivion and to pave the way for accusing all those who speak of the imam's principles of opposition to the present leadership, even if the speaker has no such intention. However, the same

point in his speech which can raise such doubts indicates that those remarks are unwarranted and illogical and are the kind of remarks that should be definitely avoided.

The following excerpt which highlighted the recent speech by the honorable leader of the Islamic revolution points precisely to the above issue. He said: "Our path is an Islamic one which the imam formulated and continually guided us along. In the past 10 years, in the course of the various occasions and trends in life and in our encounter with various events, our great imam elucidated Islam for us and has not left any ambiguity for anyone.... With verbal battles and dissent, it will be impossible to follow the path blazed by the imam. This unity of the word is to be upheld at all costs, and one must refrain from verbal battles in any form. No one should do anything which will result in differences and if one does so, the other must not intensify it."

In order to sum up our conclusion from the bitter experience of the past week, it is necessary to state the following points:

1. It is possible that an individual believes that it is obligatory to make public whatever he believes in and is in his mind. However, the same individual must correctly evaluate the circumstances prevailing in society at that time, the deleterious effects such remarks might have on society, and the blows that they might inflict on the word's unity. Thus, he must realize it is not permissible to say the kinds of things which might cause differences and discord, which are more lethal than any other form of venom for a revolutionary society in view of its enemies.

2. Just as his eminence, the imam—may his soul be sanctified—had invested his all in this revolution he brought to fruition, so the enemies of Islam also invested much in order to undermine and destroy all that the imam had built up. There is no doubt therefore that stress on continuing the imam's path and relying on its principles as he delineated them is the best way to defeat the enemies.

3. The leadership of His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i is accepted by all followers of the imam, and not one of the imam's supporters has any doubts regarding the need for obedience to him. Therefore, initiating controversies, as was done in the presermon speech at the Friday prayers in Tehran last week, was not only unwarranted, but it also resulted in projecting a tarnished image of the unified faith in the revolution's leadership. This has a weakening effect. For this reason, even when such remarks are published, they can still cause canonical doubts.

Who does not know that today our society needs unity of the word and, more than ever before, unified and strong support for the revolution's leadership and that any action jeopardizing it is unlawful?

4. If these lucid points are not enough for the one who opened the "bitterness-creating dossier," it would be better if he could pay attention to those clearer points mentioned this past week by those of sound judgment and of different tastes and opinions, all of whom unequivocally condemned propounding such views from a public tribune [preceding word in English]. The fact is that however wise and knowledgeable a person may consider himself, he should heed what the community of learned ones says and should revise his attitudes accordingly. He should act in a manner which preserves and bolsters the unity of the word.

5. Officials at the Friday prayers headquarters have a major obligation. They know that the Friday prayer ground is the trench in which the unity of the word is strengthened. They should first assure themselves on behalf of those they invite to speak that: First, that they will speak on promoting unity and fraternity in society. Second, the backbone of their speech will be stress on the revolutionary and jurisprudential principles of thought of his eminence, the imam, and third, the crux and the actual and fundamental outcome of their speech will be to strengthen the honorable leadership of the revolution and the existence of the hallowed system of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

6. Adherence to these principles, especially in abstaining meticulously from creating discord and dissent, is the obligation of all the revolution's supporters. This is exactly what the honorable leader of the revolution clearly mentioned in his latest speech when he said: This is a public obligation and duty as much as the Friday prayers and jihad and the preservation of unity today is in itself a holy war waged in the path of God."

Syria's Al-Shar' Talks With President, Velayati

JN1903184590 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1615 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Tehran—Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani today received Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' with Iranian Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati, the Iranian ambassador in Damascus, and the Syrian charge d'affaires in Tehran in attendance. They discussed bilateral ties and explored ways to deepen these ties in all areas. They also reviewed recent regional and international developments focusing on the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Palestinian question, Lebanon, and other issues of shared interest.

Meanwhile, al-Shar' today conferred with Mr. Karrubi, the speaker of Iran's Islamic Majles, with Dr. Velayati in attendance. They discussed the role of Iran's Islamic Majles and Syria's People's Assembly in boosting bilateral ties.

Earlier today, a second round of talks was held between Messrs. al-Shar' and Velayati with members of the Syrian and Iranian delegations present. Their talks dealt with bilateral relations and regional and international developments. Al-Shar' emphasized Syria's consistent position on the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian question. He indicated that Israel does not want peace

and security to prevail in the region, but seeks to extend its domination and entrench its occupation of Jerusalem and other occupied Arab territory.

Leaves Tehran 19 Mar

NC2003070090 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and the delegation accompanying him left Tehran last night after the third round of talks between Mr. al-Shar' and Mr. Velayati, our foreign minister.

Our correspondent reports that, during this round of talks, important regional problems of mutual interest were discussed.

Seven-Party Afghan Alliance Delegation Arrives

NC1903104190 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] A high-ranking delegation of the Seven-Party Alliance of Afghan Mujahidin headed by Seyyed Ahmad Gaylani arrived in Tehran yesterday, for talks with Afghan mujahidin leaders who are based in Iran.

IRNA reports that this delegation, which arrived in our country after the first conference of Afghan Shiites in Tehran, met and talked with Mr. Borujerdi, deputy foreign minister for Asia and Oceania, yesterday afternoon. During this meeting, the views of the Peshawar-based mujahidin on the recent incidents in Afghanistan and existing plans for Afghanistan's future were discussed.

Mr. Gaylani pointed out: In our struggle against the Kabul regime, we cannot agree to cooperate with elements of this regime whose hands are stained with the blood of the Afghan people. He said: Our objective is to change the current regime in Afghanistan and to have the future of the country determined by the people through elections.

Our deputy foreign minister pointed to the multifaceted support of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the rightful aspirations of the Afghan people, and stressed the need for the unity of all active mujahidin who are sincerely striving to fulfill the aspirations of the Afghan Muslims on Afghanistan's political scene.

Meets With Velayati

NC2003071390 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 20 Mar 90

[Text] Members of Afghanistan's Islamic Unity Party headed by Mr. Mazari and Mr. Sadeqi-Miri, who came to Iran recently to participate in the first assembly of the Shiites of Afghanistan, met with our Foreign Minister Mr. Velayati last night.

During this meeting, Mr. Mazari, spokesman for Afghanistan's Islamic Unity Party, reported on the most recent developments concerning the mujahidin's struggles and political activities inside the country and gave a brief history of the formation of the Islamic Unity Party.

Then Mr. Velayati pointed to the need for the unity of all the Afghan mujahidin in the effort to attain the just objectives of the Afghan Muslims. He said: We cannot consider the fate of the Muslim Afghans as separate from the fate of our country's people because, in addition to the fact that our system is an Islamic one, the great cultural ties binding the two nations have directed their fate in one course.

He also said: Our support for the Afghan Muslims has been continuous during the past decade, and our stands on the Afghanistan problem have always been stable.

Our foreign minister added: The experience of Iran's Islamic revolution can show you the path, and we hope that you will be able to overcome problems with patience and perseverance.

Velayati Interviewed on Disarmament, Resolution 598

LD1803194890 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1600 GMT 18 Mar 90

[Text] Foreign Minister Velayati, during an interview given to reporters today, explained the issues raised at the recent disarmament conference in Geneva and the trend of the talks on the implementation of Security Council Resolution 598. Referring to the trend of the talks in the Resolution, Velayati said: The UN secretary general has recently proposed a plan on the implementation of the resolution, and the UN Security Council has also expressed relatively clear support, more decisive than in the past, for this proposal. [video shows Velayati talking to a dozen reporters around a table] He added: Perez de Cuellar has taken a positive step and we evaluate the Security Council's support for this plan as relatively positive too. The secretary general's proposal, however, has some vague points that we hope will be removed by the UN secretary general during his talks and consultation with our envoy at the United Nations before resumption of the new round of talks.

In another part of this interview, referring to the fact that the articles of Resolution 598 are clear and referring to the point that this is an unprecedented resolution in the United Nations, Velayati divided the existing problems in the talks into two main groups; adding: The first group are the problems created by the Iraqi regime, and the second group stems from the Security Council's past, generally vague, approach which lacked any direction. Thanks to the efforts undertaken in recent months, the Security Council has taken a step forward and has declared support for the secretary general's efforts. Nevertheless, had the Iraqi regime ever intended to sincerely implement Resolution 598, there would have been no reason for such a long wait just to discuss ways of implementing the resolution.

Velayati stressed: We believe the withdrawal of the forces and the exchange of POW's are the two major problems, and this proposal is still workable and can reduce the region's tension to bring a lasting peace.

Referring to the recent Geneva conference on chemical weapons disarmament, Velayati said: The essential point, which was endorsed by the Islamic Republic of Iran [IRI] at the chemical weapons disarmament conference, is that for the time being we have decided not to manufacture chemical weapons, but the future of this decision depends on setting up a comprehensive convention soon.

In continuation of this interview, referring to the reflection among the participants at the conference of the IRI's revelation on the Iraqi regime's manufacturing and stock pile of the chemical weapons, Velayati said: Today the IRI is the main reviver of the idea to combat chemical weapons in the world; and the IRI's stand in the conference was extensively covered by the global mass media.

At the conclusion of the interview, Velayati said: During the past six years, the IRI was victimised by the UN Human Rights Commission due to the allegations of enemies and opponents. But thanks to the recent trip by the secretary general's envoy to Iran and his report to the secretary general on the prisoners' treatment, freedom and respect for human rights in the IRI, the false reports by the enemies were exposed.

Ahmad Khomeyni Addresses Defense Ministry Seminar

NC1903111590 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Participants in the nationwide seminar of the officials of the ideological-political department of the Ministry of Defense and Armed Forces Logistics attended a ceremony alongside the grave of the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran. They renewed their allegiance to the sacred aspirations of the late imam and emphasized their obedience to Ayatollah Khamene'i's leadership.

The Central News Unit reports that during this ceremony Hojjat ol-Eslam val Moslemin Haj Seyyed Ahmad Khomeyni spoke about the sacred objectives of Imam Khomeyni, may his soul rest in peace, during his prosperous life, and said: We should learn from the struggles of his eminence the imam and make these the hallmark of our activities.

He continued: After the demise of the imam, despite the enemies' propaganda plots, the friends of the imam joined hands and preserved the revolution and its aspirations.

In another part of his remarks, Hojjat ol-Eslam val Moslemin Ahmad Khomeyni pointed to the need for further unity, saying that justice and right must prevail in affairs.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Speaks at IRGC Graduation

LD1903151390 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 18 Mar 90

[Text] According to a Central News Unit report, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani spoke today at a graduation ceremony of fourth-year cadets of Islamic Revolution Guards Corps [IRGC] commanders and staff academy, and postgraduate cadets of the ground forces of the IRGC, which was held at the central headquarters of the IRGC. He remarked on the way the spirit of our nation and many of the world's Muslims was raised on witnessing the remarkable achievements of their courageous offspring on the battlefields and arenas of military training.

He added: At the time when the Islamic revolution was in its early days, the IRGC played an effective and successful role in various ways and his eminence the imam, may his soul be admitted to paradise, justly and graciously said: We would have had no country were it not for the IRGC.

Remarking on the way the immense efforts of the IRGC and other defensive forces of the revolution instilled fear and despair in the hearts of the enemies left and right, he said: For all those who were participating in the trend of the affairs, the eternal role of the IRGC alongside the Mobilization Corps and the Islamic Republic of Iran's Army, is unquestionable. That role is so prominent and outstanding that the most defiant enemies of the revolution fail to refute it.

The president added: Those who had neither received any military training nor fought any battles or had the chance to receive any training learned all that on the battle scene, creating epics, unique in history. Ultimately, we saw how the chief enemies were forced to enter the field, waging war by violating all international regulations. Today, however, our nation and the world's neutral observers have come to acknowledge your power, which has emanated from your obedience to the leader, adherence to Islamic tenets, and the nation's support. This is an asset which, if safeguarded and merged with the asset of knowledge, training, and military resources, could bring about further success.

Concluding his remarks, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani reiterated that obedience to the leader has been one of the immutable principles of the Armed Forces and termed direct command of the leadership as highly valuable for the Armed Forces. He added: Today, as your commander, you have a leader who fought alongside you and like you, throughout a very long period, and is a person who is most familiar with war, military affairs, the country's needs, and international conditions.

According to the report, in the course of that ceremony, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani awarde prizes to the model cadets and lecturers.

According to the Central News Unit report, in that ceremony, at which the head of the headquarters of the

commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces, the vice regent of the jurisconsult's representative in the IRGC, the chief IRGC commander and a number of IRGC commanders and cadets were present, the principal of the commanders and staff academy submitted a concise report based on the previous training courses and the start of the next training course.

Cabinet Meets, Discusses Bill on IRGC Employment

NC1903110190 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] The cabinet met yesterday afternoon. During this session, the general points of the bill concerning the employment of Islamic Revolution Guards Corps [IRGC] personnel were approved.

The Central News Unit reports that, on the basis of this bill, IRGC personnel will receive military ranks according to their experience, education, and competence. The bill also provides for all the IRGC personnel to be covered by the services of the Social Insurance Organization, the Retirement Organization, and the Health Services Organization of the Ministry of Defense.

On the basis of one of the articles of the bill, in implementing Article 147 of the Constitution, mobilization battalions, namely battalions for cultural mobilization, construction mobilization, and health mobilization, will be formed in the IRGC resistance force.

The report states that, during yesterday's cabinet meeting, the following proposals were approved:

The bill revising the construction law dated Shahrivar 1356 [month beginning 23 August 1977];

The bill on counting the years spent in higher education by teachers and employees of the Ministry of Education and the Technical and Vocational Training Organization affiliated to the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs as work experience;

The bill on concentrating the affairs pertaining to taxi services in all cities in the country under the supervision of the municipalities.

*Revolution Guard Corps Representatives Named

90OI0211G Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 1 Mar 90 p 2

[Text] News Department—In a separate decree from Hojjat ol-Eslam Abdollah Nuri, the vali-ye faqih's [supreme jurisconsult] representative in the revolutionary guard, officials representing the vali-ye faqih were appointed in the Air Force, the Infantry, and the General Staff of the Revolutionary Guard.

Our correspondent reports: In this decree, Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed 'Alireza Musavi-Javardi was appointed representative of the vali-ye faqih in the Revolutionary Guard Air Force, Hojjat ol-Eslam Sheykh Heydar Maslah was appointed representative of the vali-ye faqih in the Revolutionary Guard Infantry, and Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Alireza Mohammadkhani was appointed representative of the vali-ye faqih on the staff units of the Revolutionary Guard General Staff Office.

*Appointments of New Governors Announced

90OI0211F Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 1 Mar 90 p 2

[Text] In a separate decree, Hojjat ol-Eslam Nuri appointed seven new district governors.

The Islamic Republic News Agency, quoting the Ministry of the Interior Public Relations Office, reports that Mohammad Baghiri was appointed governor of Damghan, Akbar Darzi-Islam was appointed governor of Sume'eh Sara, Hasan Reza'i was appointed governor of Astara, 'Abdol-Reza Jamali was appointed governor of Esfahan, 'Abbas Khurshidi-Nazlu was appointed governor of Mehabad, Ahmad Mahdavi-Abhari was appointed governor of Shahrud, and 'Abdol-Rasul Shari'ati-Nezhad was appointed governor of Dashti.

*New Appointments to Various Offices Announced

90OI0211E Tehran KEYHAN HAVA'I in Persian 28 Feb 90 p 4

[Text]

- By order of Engineer Nahavandian, deputy minister of mines and metals for administration and finance, Hasan Fakheri has been appointed consultant for administration and finance.
- By order of Mas'ud Rowghani-Zanjani, presidential aide and chief of the Plan and Budget Organization, Hoseyn Shafi'ifar has been appointed chief of the Office of Expert and Consultant Affairs.
- Under a separate order by Hoseyn Kamali, minister of labor and social affairs, Dr. Mohammad Zahedi-Asl has been appointed chief of the Institute of Labor and Social Security, Karm'ali Ahmadi has been appointed supervisor of the National Refugees of the Imposed War Foundation, and Seyyed Reza Zaytun-Nezhad-Musavian has been appointed deputy minister of labor and social affairs for reconstruction support, and they have assumed their duties.
- By separate order of Tehran Mayor Karbaschi, Mohammad Aqajani-Me'mar has been appointed deputy mayor for administration and finance, and Abdol-Reza Abrisham-Kar has been appointed mayoral consultant and chief of the Tehran Supervision and Prevention Organization.
- By order of Morteza Haji, deputy minister of culture and Islamic guidance for tourism and pilgrimage affairs, Hamid Amini has been appointed general manager of the center for Iran and international tourism study and research.
- By order of Ahmad Taheri, general manager of commerce for Tehran Province, Mohammad Rowshandel has been appointed and has assumed duties as official

for centralization of Islamic councils in the 20 districts of the Municipality of Tehran.

- By order of Morteza Haji, deputy minister of culture and Islamic guidance for tourism and pilgrimage affairs, Abdol-Naser Mirchi has been appointed and has assumed duties as director of the Central Supervisory Office for Tourism and Pilgrimage Affairs Services.
- By order of Engineer Torkan, minister of defense and armed forces logistics, Dr. Mehdi Bazargan was appointed acting director of the Defense Industries Organization.

Likewise, by order of the minister of defense, Engineer Kazemi was appointed and assumed duties as successor to the Defense Industries Organization.

In a separate order by Engineer Taheri, governor-general of Tehran, Mahmud Teybani was appointed general manager of social affairs, Mohammad Reza Mirza'i was appointed general manager of political and police affairs, Mohammad Baqer-Nikkhah was appointed cultural consultant to the governor-general and chief of the Tehran Governor-General's Office of Evaluation, Inspection, and Investigation.

Engineer Gholamreza Akrami, by order of the minister of culture and higher education, was appointed supervisor of the university art complex.

Based on another order from Dr. Mostafa Mo'in, minister of culture and higher education, Engineer 'Ala'eddin Khatayi was appointed general manager of the ministry office and assumed his duties.

Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Mojtaba Haj-Akhund was appointed representative of the vali-ye faqih [supreme jurisconsult] at Bakhteran Medical University.

*Appointment in Budget Organization Announced

90OI0197F Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 15 Feb 90 p 2

[Text] Economic Service—According to a personnel action by Mr. Mas'ud Roghani-Zanjani, vice president and director of the Plan and Budget Organization, Hoseyn Shafi'i-Far was appointed as the head of the Office of the Advisers and Experts Affairs of the said organization.

*New Appointments to Propagation Organization

90OI0197E Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 13 Feb 90 p 2

[Text] News Section—According to two separate personnel actions by Ayatollah Jannati, representative of the leader of the Islamic revolution and director of the Islamic Propagation Organization, Hojjat ol-Eslam Jalaleddin Gharvi was appointed as the representative of the aforementioned organization in the airports throughout the country and Hojjat ol-Eslam Safar 'Ali Yazdan-Parast was appointed as the representative of the Islamic Propagation Organization in the Ministry of Energy.

Nepal

King Birendra Defends Partyless System

BK1603142790 Hong Kong AFP in English 1405 GMT 16 Mar 90

[Text] Kathmandu, March 16 (AFP)—Nepal's King Birendra Friday [16 March] defended the country's partyless system and said change was only possible within the existing constitutional order, state-run Radio Nepal reported.

Speaking before a large crowd in Pokhara Valley, some 225 kilometers (140 miles) west of here, the king said that in "the past three decades, we have instituted reforms... and taking into account the Nepalese aspirations, this process will continue."

But he warned that "any unconstitutional activitity that disturbs peace, tranquility and security will hinder the exercise of democratic rights and development in the country."

The speech came as police detained some 180 artists, intellectuals and students in two separate clashes in and around the capital, opposition sources said.

Some 160 artists, writers and poets at the Tri Chandra College library in central Kathmandu protesting the earlier arrest of colleagues were rounded up by police and taken away in trucks, opposition sources and witnesses said.

At a Tribhuvan University campus on the ouskirts of the capital, police detained some 20 students involved in a campus-wide democracy strike, opposition sources said.

The campus staff tied black ribbons around their arms and the students sealed their mouths with black tape to protest the denial of freedom of speech under the current partyless panchayat system, witnesses said.

Hundreds of riot police deployed in front of the campus baton-charged students and several students were beaten by police while being arrested, witnesses said. There was no official confirmation on the number of arrests made.

In his speech, the monarch of this mountain kingdom nestled between China and India said that "there can be no solution to problems where there is irresponsible behaviour." He defended the three-decade partyless system, which received a renewed popular mandate in a 1980 referendum, saying, "the mandate given by the national referendum is the basis for retaining the panchayat polity." He was speaking on the eve of his return to the capital after a 10-week visit to the western part of the country.

In response, the outlawed Nepali Congress said King Birendra's address was "most disappointing" and had not addressed the opposition de?ands for restoration of multi-party democracy in Nepal. The opposition party

said the king had ignored the "suppression of thousands of persons and torture in jails."

A statement issued on behalf of the country's artists, writers and poets said the "the panchayat government has created a reign of terror throughout the country and all the free communication media have been completely restricted."

The statement added that 37 writers and artists had been detained since February 18 and demanded an immediate end to the "reign of terror."

Meanwhile, the students of the Trinhuvan University engineering campus at Pokhara, 225 kilometers (141 miles) west of here, boycotted their classes and hoisted black flags of protest while burning panchayat symbols.

Indicates Reforms Possible

BK1903093690 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] In Nepal, the banned Nepali Congress and the United Left Front spearheading the movement for multiparty system have been invited to come on the common platform of panchayat [partyless system] for discussions in a bid to reform the system.

All India Radio Kathmandu correspondent, Harish Segon, reports that King Birendra has indicated that there is scope for reforms in the panchayat system and the Constitution can be further amended for this purpose.

Government Releases 200 Intellectuals, Academics

BK1703082290 Hong Kong AFP in English 0805 GMT 17 Mar 90

[Text] Kathmandu, March 17 (AFP)—Nearly 200 Nepalese intellectuals and academics, including writers, poets, movie and theatre artists, were released late Friday [16 March] after nearly eight hours in police detention, a writers union spokesman said. Included among those released were senior academics Krishna C. Pradhan, Dhanush C. Gautam and popular artists Madan K. Shrestha and Hari B. Acharya, the spokesman said. The arrests had been made earlier Friday following separate silent protests at several institute of learnings.

Teachers and students at the state-run Tri Chandra College in the centre of Kathmandu had rallied to protest the arrest of 34 writers and artists Wednesday. The Patan Multiple College staff and the students staged a protest inside their college against attacks by pro-government assailants Wednesday. Several students and teachers arrested Friday in connection with the protests were still in police custody, sources said.

Meanwhile, reports from Jhapa District, some 390 kilometres (243 miles) southeast of here, said a group of 300 students, youths and banned opposition party activists Friday afternoon held an anti-government rally near Gada Muni. They also protested at alleged torture of people in police custody.

In nearby Kakadbhitta, a group of 50 opposition activists and students burnt an effigy to express resentment against the government system, sources said.

In a related development, human rights activist Krishna Phadi, 27, has entered the ninth day of a hunger strike called to protest against the inhumane treatment of political and student detainees.

Indian Envoy on 'Baseless' Accusations on Kashmir

BK2003102690 Delhi General Overseas Service in English 1000 GMT 20 Mar 90

[Text] The Indian ambassador to Nepal, Retired Lieutenant General S.K. Sinha, called on the Nepalese foreign minister, Mr. Shailendra Upadhyaya, in Kathmandu yesterday and made it clear that Jammmu and Kashmir is an integral part of India. His statement came in response to a reference made by Nepal's official newspaper GORKHA PATRA regarding Jammu and Kashmir. General Sinha said the Indian Government takes a serious view of this reference by the official newspaper of a friendly country. He told the Nepal Government that India also views seriously baseless allegations made in the same newspaper about hostile activities directed against that country from across the India-Nepal border and comparing these with Pakistan's involvement in terrorist activities in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir. General Sinha impressed upon the Kathmandu government that such irresponsible and baseless accusations are not repeated at this juncture of developing friendly relations between the two countries.

Sri Lanka

Troop Withdrawal To Be Completed on 24 Mar

BK1903020890 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1600 GMT 18 Mar 90

[Text] The last contingent of the Indian Peacekeeping Force [IPKF] in Sri Lanka will leave Trincomalee next Saturday [24 March]. The commander of the IPKF, Lieutenant General, A.S. Kalkat, told newsmen in Trincomalee today that all the armed contingents of the IPKF in Jaffna Peninsula will leave 2 days earlier.

About the achievements of the IPKF in Sri Lanka, the commander said that the concept of Tamil government in the predominantely Tamil area of the country has become a reality under a legal entity. Tamil has become one of the official languages of the island. The IPKF also carried out civic operations by bringing succor to the people of the Northeastern Province and carrying out massive rehabilitation activities.

The commander said that 1,155 IPKF members were killed and about 3,000 wounded in the Northeastern Province.

Premadasa Criticizes Indian Military Intervention

BK1903145490 Hong Kong AFP in English 1422 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Colombo, March 19 (AFP)—President Ranasinghe Premadasa has sharply criticized India's military deployment in Sri Lanka, barely a fortnight ahead of a planned troop withdrawal by New Delhi.

The Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC) Monday also quoted the president as saying that the Indian troops sent to Sri Lanka three years ago would leave his island before their promised March 31 deadline.

"It is not proper to invite a foreign force to our country at any time, despite the differences or the hardship faced by our people," he said, shortly after opening a post office at Anamaduwa town north of here Sunday. "President Premadasa noted that the country sending the troops, or the country that receives the troops, do not gain anything," the state-owned SLBC quoted him as saying.

New Delhi deployed troops in Sri Lanka's Tamil-majority northeast under a bilateral agreement of July 1987 which sought to end a bloody Tamil separatist campaign for a homeland called Eelam.

The pact ran into trouble when it was rejected by the dominant Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) group, prompting a crackdown by the Indian Army which has claimed the lives of more than 1,100 soldiers.

Mr. Premadasa's comments were widely seen to be directed against his predecessor Junius Jayewardene, who said here during the weekend that Sri Lanka would never forget the "sacrifices" made by the Indian troops. Mr. Premadasa also said that the Indian Army, which at one time had up to nearly 52,000 men in Sri Lanka, had failed to crush the LTTE, the strongest of six major Tamil militant groups.

The SLBC said that the president announced to wild cheering and clapping that the last of the Indian troops still in Sri Lanka would return home "before the end of this month."

"Peace is being re-established in the north and east," he said, referring to the sprawling Tamil-majority province which the LTTE has virtually taken over following the Indian military pullout.

The estimated 5,000 Indian troops in Sri Lanka are confined mostly to the Trincomalee harbour in the east coast. India has said they will return home by March 31, though officials here claim the withdrawal might finish earlier.

Mr. Premadasa, elected president in December 1988, also credited the LTTE with "vision" for having dramatically opened peace talks with him in April last year. The talks resulted in the president publicly asking New Delhi in June to immediately withdraw its army, sparking off a bitter diplomatic row between the two South Asian neighbours.

Mr. Premadasa has been among the bitterest critics of the 1987 accord, and was also among the first to accuse the Indian army of "genocide" for reportedly killing hundreds of Tamils for suspected links with the LTTE.

Pakistani Foreign Minister Arrives on Visit

BK1903162990 Colombo Domestic Service in English 1245 GMT 19 Mar 90

[Text] Pakistani Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub Khan arrived in Sri Lanka this afternoon on a two-day official visit. He was met at the airport by Sri Lankan counterpart, Minister Ranjan Wijeratne, and the Pakistani high commissioner, (Mir Abad Hussain) [name as heard]. Mr. Yaqub Khan will have discussions with President Premadasa tomorrow on the consensus reached with other SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] leaders with regard to the holding of the fifth summit. Mr. Ranjan Wijeratne will host a dinner in honor of the Pakistani foreign minister tonight.

Diplomatic Relations Broken With Israel

BK2003094890 Hong Kong AFP in English 0910 GMT 20 Mar 90

[Text] Colombo, March 20 (AFP)—The Sri Lankan Government said Tuesday [20 March] it was breaking diplomatic links with Israel and closing the Israeli interests section operating in the United States Embassy here since the mid-1980's.

The surprise announcement was made by the presidential secretariat in a communique, which added that President Ranasinghe Premadasa had instructed that the interests section be "terminated" by April 20.

The Israeli interests section declined to react to the announcement, saying it had not been officially informed about the decision.

The four paragraph communique said Sri Lanka would not reestablish diplomatic relations with Israel until it recognised the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) as the legitimate representative of the Palestinians.

Israel would also have to withdraw "from all occupied Palestinian territory and agree to participate in an international conference on the Middle East convened by the United Nations," it said.

The communique said Mr. Premadasa had asked the foreign ministry to take "appropriate action to terminate the Israeli interests section before the 20th of April."

Israel had an embassy here until 1970 when it was ordered shut by the then government of Sirima Bandaranaike, who also broke diplomatic ties. The decision was partially revoked after her defeat in 1977.

The PLO has an embassy here.

Paper on India's Rejection of 'Eelam' Republic

BK1903130790 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 6 Mar 90 p 6

[Editorial: "Welcome Assurance"]

[Text] It was appropriate that the Government of India, reacting to the resolution carried by the EPRLF/ENDLF [Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front/Eelam National Democratic Liberation Front] majority in the North-Eastern Provincial Council to call itself the "Democratic Republic of Eelam", has unequivocally said that India "does not support any call for Eelam in any form".

The statement made by the official spokesman in New Delhi, while being commendably prompt and unambiguous, fell short of imposing any stricture or criticism on Mr Varadaraja Perumal and his colleagues in the EPRLF and ENDLF for what they had done.

As we pointed out last week, the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement of 1987 imposes a cardinal obligation on India to preserve the Unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka. This, in fact, is Article One of the agreement which is commonly referred to as the Peace Accord.

While Colombo has wisely adopted a low-key approach to Mr Perumal's antics, India has made its position clear. It is unlikely that those agencies of the Indian government that are represented here were unaware of Mr Perumal's intentions. Perhaps the rather unusual format of a reversible separation announced by the chief minister suggests, at least, a degree of Indian influence.

Mr Perumal has, after all, said that the provincial council he now describes as the Assembly of a self-proclaimed Republic of Eelam would revert to the status quo within a year provided certain conditions he has presented to Chief Minister Karunanidhi, in Madras, are met.

It is necessary for us, in Sri Lanka, to understand why Mr Perumal has done what he has. He clearly understands that the EPRLF is now a spent force. As Mr Hector Abhayavardhana of the LSSP [Lanka Sama Samaja Party] pointed out, he has to make a little noise before leaving Sri Lanka with the Indian troops.

An EPRLF parliamentarian, Mr V.K. Yogasangary, attempting to justify Mr Perumal's UDI [Unilateral Declaration of Independence] if that was what had in fact been done), has said in a statement that what the chief minister had done was to ask the Government of Sri Lanka to fulfil 19 demands if it really does not want the country divided.

The MP [Member of Parliament] says that the chief minister had neither declared boundaries nor raised an army to protect them. What he has not said was that the ground situation dictates that Mr Perumal cannot do that, however much he may wish to.

After all, evidence is not lacking that the EPRLF can only survive the wrath of the Tigers in those areas where the Indian troops remain. The TNA [Tamil National Army] is now in a shambles, and there are reports that members of the CVF [Citizen's Volunteer Force] have decamped with their guns.

Mr Perumal himself has not told the country that he plans to be in Sri Lanka once the Indian pull-out is completed, although he has fixed a meeting of his "Assembly" for May. Answers to journalists' questions on these matters have been evasive.

While Perumal-bashing may be fashionable now, Lankans must not forget that the EPRLF did come into the democratic mainstream, won an election the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] tried its best to wreck, and co-operated with the IPKF [Indian Peacekeeping Force] to an extent that it is being called an Indian client.

Although the wheel has turned, we must not be unmindful of the need for good relations with India. The LTTE will clearly play a major role in the north-east in the coming months, and it is time that the Tigers told the country that they stand for an undivided nation.

It is also necessary that conditions are swiftly created for the various Tamil groups to coexist whatever their past or present differences. If the LTTE could reach an arrangement with Colombo, it should not be impossible for the Tamil groups to mend their own fences.

This must not be the time for any Lankan, be it Varatharajah Perumal or anybody else, to feel the need to seek refuge in India or elsewhere. All citizens of Sri Lanka, whatever their race or religion, must feel both secure and welcome in this island of ours. That is what we must all work towards.

LTTE Responsible for TULF Leaders' Slaying

BK2003080090 Hong Kong AFP in English 0750 GMT 20 Mar 90

[Text] Colombo, March 20 (AFP)—The deputy leader of Sri Lanka's most powerful Tamil guerrilla group has accepted responsibility for last year's assassination of two key Tamil moderate leaders, a newspaper reported Tuesday [20 March].

THE ISLAND quoted Gopalaswamy Mahendirajah of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) as saying that the two leaders of the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) were gunned down because they were "agents" of India.

"They were not killed because they held views different from the LTTE, but probably because they were acting as agents of India, in short (they were) traitors, collaborators," he was quoted as telling the Sri Lankan fortnightly, LANKA GUARDIAN.

It is the first time that a top LTTE leader has admitted that the group killed TULF leaders Appapillai Amirthalingam and V. Yogeswaran, who once backed the Sri Lankan Tamil campaign for a homeland, on July 13.

The LTTE had initially denied any links with the three men who killed the TULF leaders at their Colombo home and issued a statement mourning their death. The killers were in turn shot dead by Sri Lankan policemen.

A second-ranking political leader of the LTTE, known by his nom de guerre Dinesh, reportedly claimed responsibility for the twin killings at a meeting in northern Vavuniya District on January 15.

Mr. Mahendirajah was also quoted as saying: "In the battleground the LTTE kills those who betray the cause. In a national liberation struggle, the battle is everywhere, the traitor anywhere."

The TULF was among the Tamil groups which accepted a July 1987 Indo-Sri Lanka accord under which New Delhi deployed troops in the island's northeast to disarm Tamil separatist guerrillas.

The LTTE repudiated the accord and launched a guerrilla war against the Indian Army in October 1987, leading to the death of more than 1,100 troops and hundreds of LTTE cadres and civilians.

All Indian troops are poised to quit Sri Lanka by the end of this month.

Premadasa Congratulates Gorbachev on Election

BK1703092890 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0724 GMT 17 Mar 90

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, March 17 (LANKAPUVATH)—The message from President Ranasinghe Premadasa to USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev states: "The people and the Government of Sri Lanka join me in extending to you our warm felicitations on your election as the first executive president of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

"Your election is a recognition of your wisdom, foresight and dedication, a tribute to your leadership, diplomatic skills and statesmanship as well as an endorsement of your policies and programmes. I am confident that the close and friendly relations existing between Sri Lanka and the Soviet Union will be maintained and further enhanced during your new term of office. Please accept my best wishes for the peace, progress and prosperity of the people of the Soviet Union as well as for your personal well being and good health."